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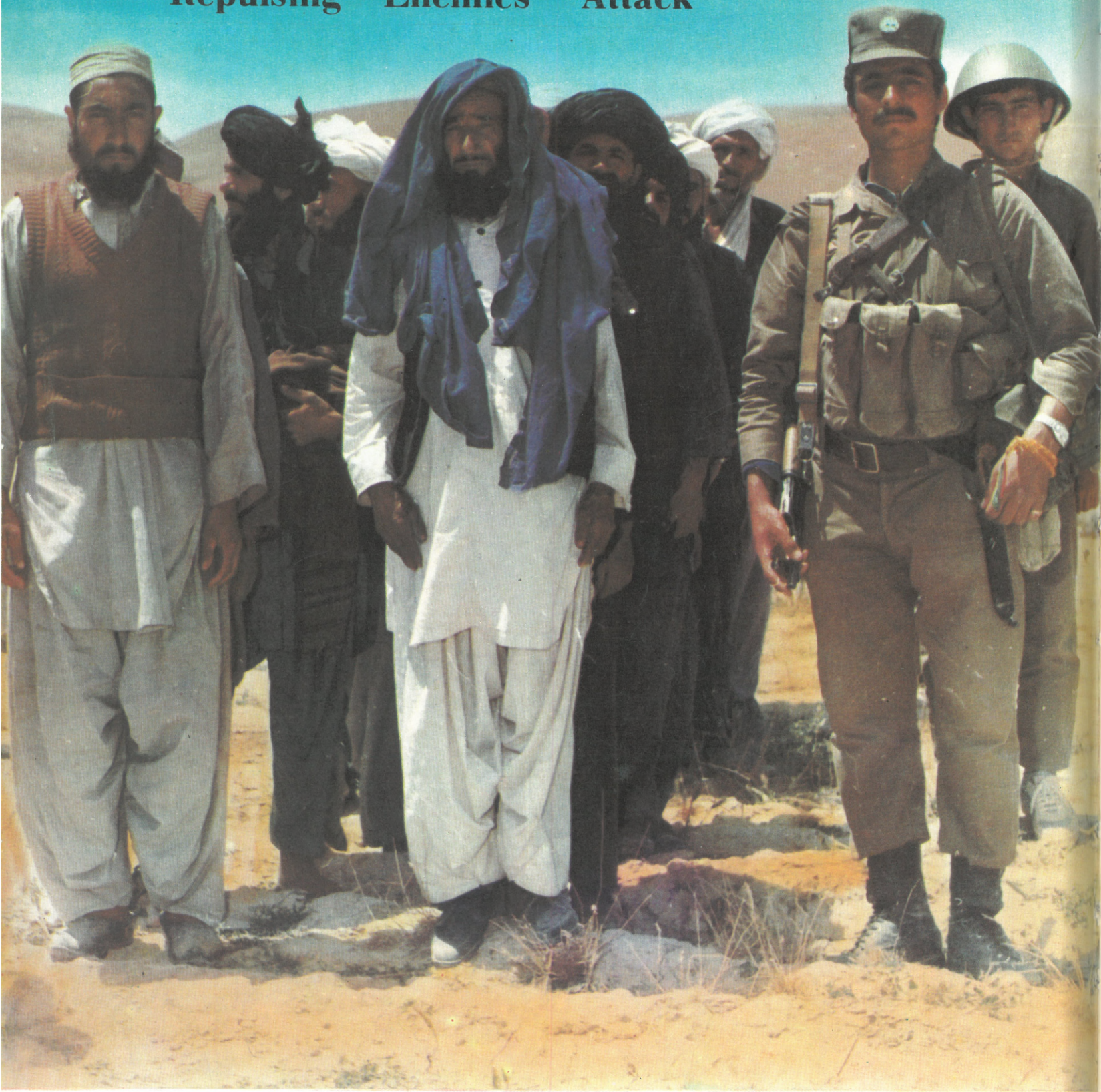
AFGHANISTAN Today

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Repulsing Enemies' Attack



During the process of national reconciliation many a thousand of armed oppositionists laid down their arms and agreed to cooperate with the state power. But in case of a crude violation of the cease-fire terms by the extremists, the Afghan army deals retaliatory blows on the enemy. Thus, in response to the

attempts of the extremists to take advantage of national reconciliation for stepping up subversive operations, the Afghan army was forced to carry out a series of combat operations in a number of the country's areas. In the photo: Armed extremists arrested in Badghis province

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It has become quite common to see Afghan girls and women at industrial plants



Fortress-like house (Kamari village, Bagrami district, Kabul province)

IN THIS ISSUE

	New Land and Water Regulation	2
FRIENDLY RELATIONS	October Revolution and Destiny of Afghan People	3
	Afghanistan-USSR: Direct Links between the Provinces and Republics	6
NATIONAL ECONOMY	Jangalak Factory	8
PRIVATE SECTOR	Watan Plastic	10
PLACE TO VISIT	Nangarhar	12
RELIGION	Recitation of Holy Koran	21
CHILDREN	Motherland Takes Care of Children	22
DEFENDERS OF REVOLUTION	How to Become a Hero	26
LETTERS	Reader's Opinion	27
WOMEN	Princess of Balkh Leading a New Life	28 29
YOUTH	DYOA's Contribution	31
SPORTS	Wrestling	32
CULTURE	Eltaf — a Virtuoso Vocalist	3rd cover



New Land and Water Regulation

Afghanistan is an agricultural country and over 80 per cent of its population are engaged in agriculture. Being one of the major sectors of the national economy, agriculture brings 60 per cent of gross domestic product. Therefore, agrarian issues in the DRA and measures for developing agriculture comprise the pivotal topics of the policy, decisions and measures of the people's power of the country.

Under the conditions of national reconciliation the leadership of the country not only wants to retain the property of repatriates in towns, but also in villages as it helps the reconciliation process.

According to the new decree, the government's policy concerning the agrarian issues has been reconstructed to the benefit of the peasantry and all strata of the toilers of the country and the establishment of a reasonable and firm economic system of the land relations leaves impact on the process of the realization of the national reconciliation policy.

The decree was issued under Article 44 of the Fundamental Principles of the DRA and fully conformed with the declaration of the Extraordinary Session of the Revolutionary Council dated December 3, 1986,

An official explaining to the villagers the essence of the new land and water regulations



Collecting potato harvest in their own plot of land (Ghor province)

which took into account the national and democratic essence of the April Revolution; the results achieved in the implementation of land and water reforms to the benefit of broad strata of landless and small landholders, the characteristics of land utilization in the country, the principles of sacred religion of Islam as well as customs and traditions of the Afghan people.

According to this decree, the lands that have been distributed to the landless and small landholders in the process of land and water reforms and that are cultivated and utilized by them would remain in their permanent use.

The conditions and the criteria of distribution of land to peasants shall be fixed differentially, according to legislative documents and taking into account the size of land for distribution in the locality, its fertility, location and irrigation conditions, and keeping in view the number of members in each particular family as well as specific local characteristics. The limit on land ownership for a family in the DRA shall be 100 jeribs (20 hectares) of first degree land or its equivalent. This ceiling shall not be applicable to the owners of orchards and vineyards, provided their entire area is covered with fruit bearing trees or vines. The ceiling is not applicable to the lands consecrated to pious uses, including charitable trusts belonging to holy places such as mosques, religious madrassas and graveyards. It is also not applicable to lands belonging to landlords who have played an active role in the realization of national reconciliation, made noticeable contribution to the cessation of bloodshed and establishment of nation-wide peace and other cases anticipated in legislative documents. The activity on such lands shall be regulated by legislative documents that envisage the use of economic levers and the system of tax payment.

Likewise, permission shall be given for the establishment of mechanized agricultural institutions and farms, private and joint corporations on the lands in the possession of either private owners or the state, making use of the employment of labour and the lease of lands. The lands of such institutions shall not come under the ceiling for land ownership.

The peasants who have received lands from the state, can expand the size of their lands through purchase of additional land within the permissible ceiling. The right of sale, donation, mortgage and lease of lands within the permissible ceiling is given to all strata and landowners. The socio-economic relations between the landowners and leasees as well as the conditions of employment of labour on the lands of landowners are regulated by the legislative documents concerned.

Therefore, the ceiling on landownership was raised from 30 to 100 jeribs or its equivalent. Why was this decision adopted? Because the results of the implementation of the land and water reforms after the April Revolution were not quite satisfactory. Only a quarter of 340,000 hectares of land is cultivated which has been distributed to 340,000 landless and small landholders. Shortage of water, intervention of reaction and imperialism, lack of improved seeds, fertilizers, agricultural credits and machinery and slackening in the process of organizing small-scale producers in cooperatives are the causes of the failure of the above issues.

Amendment in the ceiling on landownership is not a retreat in the DRA's policy, but it is an economic and political requirement. As a result of our experience and on the basis of the experience of the progressive countries like Poland, the GDR, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania and others such amendment is applicable to the process of the land reform of the DRA. It is clear that this amendment was a necessary step under the condition of national reconciliation policy.

By Zia Kazem

FRIENDLY RELATIONS



October Revolution and Destiny of Afghan People

The 70th anniversary of the October Revolution is undoubtedly the event of world importance. It is not only a great revolution's anniversary, but an anniversary of the drastic turning point of the contemporary world history. Since then the entire course of historical development has changed because the socialist revolution in Russia has become a pattern for the oppressed peoples of the world to follow. The first among them has become the Afghan people, who experienced the liberating influence of the October Revolution. The people's revolution in Russia has become a great impetus for the liberation movement in Afghanistan, which finally resulted in acquiring the complete independence by the Afghan people.

The news of the declaration "To all Working Moslems of Russia and East" dated November 20, 1917, that proclaimed the abrogation of all unjust agreements and treaties forced by tsarism and other western colonialists onto the peoples of the East reached Afghanistan in the end of 1918. It made a great impression on the progressive forces of the country. The periodical *Saraj-ul-Akhbar* published by outstanding public figure Mahmoud Tarzi carried a series of articles about Soviet Russia and "acknowledgement and gratitude of the Afghan people" were expressed for its position taken with regard to Afghanistan and all peoples of the East.

After the victory of the liberation struggle of the Afghan people in the 1919 uprising, the young and independent Afghanistan and Soviet Russia were the first states that, giving official recognition to each other, came out to maintain cooperation and unity in their joint struggle against colonialism for achieving progress. Vladimir Lenin, congratulating King Amanullah, called it "a great friendship between the two great peoples".

Mahmoud Tarzi, who had become the first foreign minister of the young independent state of Afghanistan, in his congratulatory message sent on September 13, 1920 to G. V. Chicherin, People's Commissar (Minister) for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet state on the conclusion of the Afghan-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Good-neighbourliness, wrote: "The main factor that has caused our state to sign a friendship treaty with the young state of Soviet Russia, was the common policy aimed at the collapse of imperialist oppression in the entire world, and in particular the policy of emancipating the peoples of the East regardless of their nationalities and religions from the sway and oppression of blood-suckers of the world and that the government of your Excellency has paid serious heed to this policy".

Since its very emergence, the state of Soviets has been consistently following a new policy in international relations based on peace, peaceful co-existence and defence of the rights of peoples to independent national progress. The Soviet Russia was the only state in the world that explicitly set forth among other things, the recognition of the independence of Afghanistan in international agreements and cancelled imperialist agreements concluded on Afghanistan by tsarist Russia and British colonialism. Afghanistan, in its turn, proclaiming the national liberation war against British colonialism and recognizing the young Soviet Republic, fulfilled its national and international mission before the working people of Russia.

The war for independence of Afghans against Britons culminated in the total defeat of British aggressors in the Soviet Central Asian region and strongly consolidated the state of Soviet Russia and the liberation movement in the Indian subcontinent.

That is why Britons made all efforts to suffocate the victory of the Afghan people and its direct significance for the region. Apart from the overt political intrigues and blackmail Afghanistan was subjected to economic blockade. If this had happened before the October Revolution, certainly it might have had serious consequences. But the presence of the State of Soviets became the reliable guaranties for the young Afghan state for its independent development.

Economic and trade relations and issues pertaining to the transit of commodities were also mentioned in the Friendship and Good-neighbourliness Treaty between Afghanistan and the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic signed on February 28, 1921. And thus the Afghan people have attained for the first time the confident way out of the economic blockade of British colonialism and imperialism.

The signing of the February 28 (1921) treaty laid the foundation for the recognition of Afghanistan as an independent country. After concluding this treaty in Moscow, Afghanistan was able to sign friendship treaties with Turkey in March, 1921, trade agreement with France on April 28, 1921, friendship treaty with Iran on June 22, 1921, and established on June 3, 1921 political relations to the extent of exchanging ambassadors with Italy.

The United Kingdom that found the emergence of an independent Afghanistan in the international arena and its good-neighbourly and equal relations with the state of Soviets to be a real danger for the continuation of its plundering rule in the region, sent a delegation under the chairmanship of Dobbs to Kabul in order to persuade King Amanullah to sever friendly relations with the Soviet Russia in exchange for particular privileges that would supposedly be given by Britain to Afghanistan. However, King Amanullah did not accept the 'privileges' that were aimed at the re-enslavement of Afghanistan, and called the Loya Jirgah (Grand Assembly) from August 7 to 11, 1921. Among other issues pertaining to the international relations of Afghanistan, the Loya Jir-

gah defended the historic victory of the Afghan people, adopted the position against the British colonialism, resolutely condemned all types of restrictions imposed on the national sovereignty of Afghanistan and endorsed the Afghan-Soviet treaty.

It was exactly after that event that Britain was compelled to sign the peace agreement with Afghanistan on November 22, 1921 in Kabul. The establishment of an independent Afghan state in the international arena had been a deadly blow to British colonial rule in the Middle and Near East and left deep impact on the acceleration of the historic process of anticolonial struggle in Asia.

And, thenceforth the expansion of international economic relations was set forth as one of the main issues leading to the subsequent progress of Afghanistan and the capital of national traders of Afghanistan was the main pivot of its realization. Since the trade capital of Afghanistan to a great extent depended on the capitalist world, imperialist forces tried to exert pressure on the trade capital of Afghanistan in an attempt to use it as a means of political influence in Afghanistan.

However, under the conditions when the British put into effect the economic blockade against Afghanistan, it was the Soviet state that showed readiness to expand its trade relations with Afghanistan. Moreover, the 1929—32 economic crisis that engulfed the entire capitalist world severely hurt the development of new trade capital of Afghanistan. At that time, the objective need of the development of trade capital of the country despite the yearning of the then ruling regimes to stick to the West and Britain, lay in improving the trade relations with the Soviet Union.

Since the early 30s, almost 50 per cent of Afghan export was dealt with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union occupied the first place in importing Afghan goods. In the years 1932—38, the share of the Soviet Union in the foreign trade of Afghanistan grew by 24 per cent. The expansion of economic and trade relations with the Soviet Union caused the reduction of dependency of national capital of Afghanistan on big world monopolies. It enabled the development of great national capital to compete with the influence of foreign capital functioning in the country.

The fruitful economic cooperation resulted in the extension of the treaty of non-aggression and good-neighbourliness between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union in 1936, the treaty that had determining impact on the stand of Afghanistan in the years of the Second World war.

The great historic victory of the Soviet Union over Hitlerite fascism furnished new grounds for the powerful growth of the united universal anti-imperialist process. In the post-World-war II period Afghanistan began its powerful move in line with the victories of the liberation movements in the region. This historic victory opened up for Afghanistan a new era characterized by the retreat of local dependent reactionary ruling circles, the strengthening of the role of the state in the economic development, great leap of democratic revolutionary movement of the people. But this era has also become the period of the accelerated interference of the United States in our country.

The US policy in Afghanistan was aimed at penetrating into Afghan market and drawing it into the orbit of its policy in the region. For achieving this end, the United States employed two means of pressure on Afghanistan.

On the one hand, it tried to exert pressure on international trade of Afghanistan through introducing restrictions on the trade of Pakistan, and plundered, on the other hand, the national wealth of Afghanistan through rendering the "assistance" for the economic development, the notorious example of which was Helmand project.

Under such conditions the people of Afghanistan

chose once again the expansion of equal relations with the Soviet Union as the only way out of the situation and reliable support in their anti-imperialist struggle.

The development of relations of Afghanistan with the Soviet Union helped to withstand the intensified imperialist interference and dictate against Afghanistan. Under the conditions of ban on transit of commodities via Pakistan and issue pertaining to drawing the country to the membership of CENTO pact, the Loya Jirgah was held in Kabul city in 1955. The Loya Jirgah that was based on the democratic disposition of the Afghan people, reaffirmed neutrality, pursuit of the policy of peaceful co-existence, stand against neo-colonialism and non-alignment to military blocs and confirmed the all-round expansion of ties with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The new era in the Afghan-Soviet economic relations began with the strengthening of the role of the state in the economic development of Afghanistan, creation of state economic sector and the implementation of five-year socio-economic plans.

A new page was opened in the bi-lateral relations between the countries after the national democratic April Revolution (1978).

The share of the Soviet Union in financing the five-year plans has been 70 per cent on an average. With the assistance of the Soviet Union over 100 basic projects in the production fields have been commissioned. Seventy-five per cent of industrial production in state sector and 60 per cent of power generation are produced by the plants built with Soviet assistance. Sixty per cent of main asphalted highways has been built with the assistance of the country of Soviets, and 95,000 well-qualified specialists have been trained for the country. Now the exchange of commodities with the Soviet Union constitutes over 65 per cent of foreign trade turnover of the DRA.

The contribution and the role of the Soviet Union in assisting the people of Afghanistan in their struggle for achieving national progress and democracy and victory over century-old backwardness are hardly to be overestimated in the economic and cultural map of present-day Afghanistan and in all spheres of the contemporary life of the country.

In four development plans, that is, almost during 20 years, the state has made an investment of 71 billion Afghanis of which 75 per cent has been financed from foreign sources. The share of the Soviet Union was tangible in this. The total assistance rendered by the Soviet Union to Afghanistan during this period has exceeded 2,225 million dollars, i.e., at least 10 times more than the assistance given by the United States at the same time.

The victory of the national-democratic April Revolution in Afghanistan is the continuation of that very historic process which began with the October Revolution.

In the years after the revolution, the Afghan-Soviet economic and technical cooperation has gained a regular character and changed into the main factor of historic turning from backwardness to national progress of the country. In the post-revolution years, the Soviet Union has contributed to the economic development of Afghanistan an average 400 million dollars every year. Apart from this, a considerable quantity of gratis assistance aid of the friendly Soviet Union was given. In 1360—1364 (1981—1985) the state revenue made from the sale of gratis aid of the Soviet Union, constituted 10.5 per cent of the country's total income.

The fraternal Soviet Union has rendered great assistance in the implementation of the first five-year plan after the revolution, and the share of the Soviet Union in financing the plan is over 70 per cent.

In the years 1365-69 (1986—1991) over 130 projects will be commissioned in all spheres of national economy.

The share of Soviet assistance is of more significance

under the conditions of the realization of the policy of national reconciliation in our country. Expansion of gratis aid and all-round economic and technical cooperation of the Soviet Union with Afghanistan characterizes the main yearning for the further development of friendly relations between the two countries. This is proved, above all, by the vast gratis aid to repatriates that exceeds 30 million roubles. The new field of direct cooperation with national entrepreneurs is successfully developing. With the direct cooperation of the Soviet Union with Afghan capital holders over 170 new economic projects would be built in Afghanistan. The 50-million-rouble credit provided by the Soviet Union stipulated vast opportunities for Afghan national entrepreneurs. A new-type of mutually beneficial Afghan-Soviet cooperation is successfully implemented directly by the Soviet republics and provinces with Afghan provinces. All these new spheres are opened under the conditions of persistent work aimed at full realization of the objectives of the five-year plan.

By and large, the April Revolution has placed the traditionally fraternal and good-neighbourly relations of our country with the country of the Great October Socialist Revolution on a qualitatively new basis and has vastly expanded them. These relations are of particular importance from the point of view of ensuring country's economic independence, rupture from the markets of world capitalism, cohesion with world socialist markets, achievement of new forms of cooperation based on equality of rights and mutual interests and the participation in the process of economic integration with socialist countries.

The vital and historic significance of this becomes evident when one assesses the present situation of the country from the point of view of escalation of imperialist economic blockade and terrorism. In the years after the revolution, the Reagan Administration alone has spent over two billion dollars for undermining the heroic efforts of the Afghan people aimed at achieving national progress and democracy. This figure is 10 times more than the total assistance rendered to the development of our country by the United States of America during the 20 years prior to the revolution. Material losses of over 50 billion Afghanis have been inflicted upon our country by destructions emanating from the undeclared imperialist war against the DRA. This figure is more than two thirds of the total investments made for development in 20 years before the revolution. Doing so, the Reagan Administration tries to take revenge of the people of Afghanistan who have risen to remove backwardness, poverty, starvation, diseases and illiteracy.

The great impact of the October Revolution and its significant achievements for the Afghan people, that is, the Afghan-Soviet friendship has been outstanding for the destiny and national progress of Afghanistan.

The national and historic Loya Jirgah held in 1985 in Kabul, outlined once again the historically great importance of Afghan-Soviet friendship in safeguarding national independence and territorial integrity of the revolutionary Afghanistan and conformed with the continuation of further consolidation of fraternal friendship and all-round Afghan-Soviet relations.

Now 70 years after the October Revolution, this historic reality is tangible for all reasons that the relations with the homeland of the Great October Revolution, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are directly linked with the most basic pertaining to safeguarding national independence, ensuring national progress, democracy and peace in our country. The relations with the Soviet Union would be a promising and reliable factor for the Afghan people to have a free and progressive future.

By: Hamid Rugh

Afghanistan-USSR:

Direct Links between the Provinces and Republics

Afghan-Soviet cooperation has many dimensions in the economic, political, military, cultural, scientific and other spheres of life. Nevertheless, during the recent years, it has been expanded and enriched with newer forms of application. Among such, for example, one can name rendering to the country's population wide-ranging gratis aid, which was, and is directly distributed among the most needy inhabitants of all

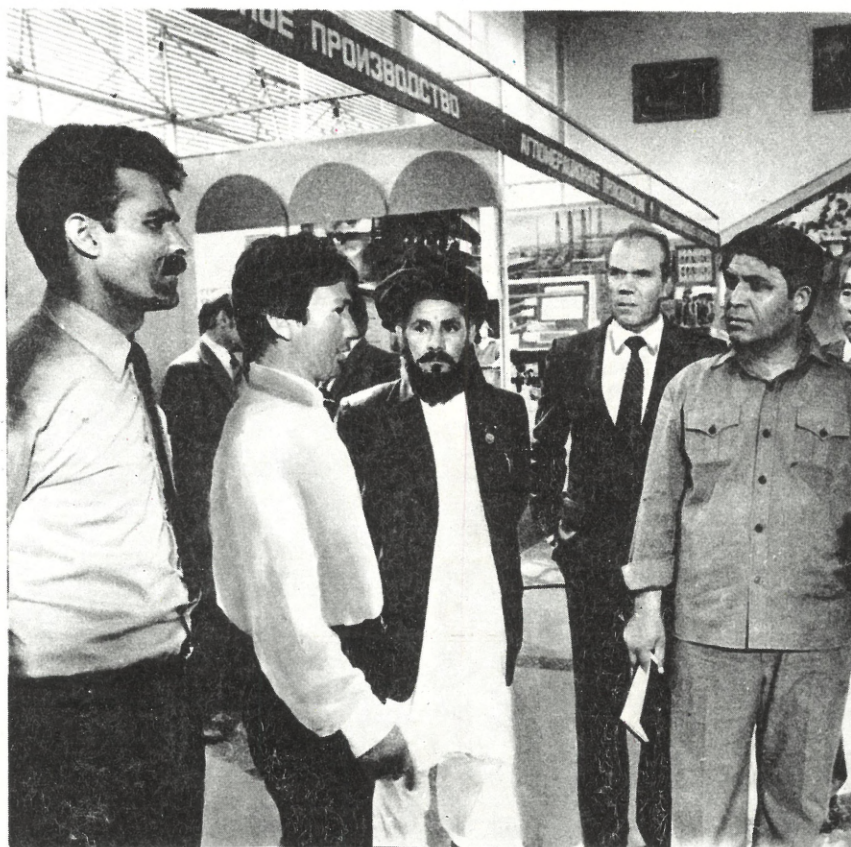
the provinces. Recently an agreement has been signed whereby a Soviet credit to Afghan private entrepreneurs amounting to 50 million roubles has been made available. But, perhaps, the most important innovation in the cooperation between the two countries especially from the social point of view, are the establishment of direct links of the provinces of the country with the Republics and regions of the USSR.

These direct links came into practice in late 1986. The pioneers became the northern provinces of the DRA and Central Asian Republics of the USSR — Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenia. In the beginning, it was supposed to deal only with border trade and exchange. The delegations of the Soviet Republics visited Afghanistan, went to some provinces, got acquainted with their problems, and having considered the various possibilities, concluded agreements on direct links in different spheres. When some experience of establishing and developing such relations had been accumulated, when their unquestionable benefit for the economic and social development of the provinces had become obvious, the second round of such contacts took place. In July-August, 1987, the delegations of remaining provinces went to other Republics and regions of the USSR — to Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldavia, to some regions of the Russian Federation, the Ukraine and Belorussia. Thus, now each of the 29 provinces of Afghanistan have direct links with one or another Republic or region of the Soviet Union. And Kabul, correspondingly, with Moscow.

The agreements on direct links envisage the exchange of delegations and groups of public figures, experts, representatives of the different strata of population; links between the working collectives of enterprises and organizations, dispatch of Soviet specialists for rendering assistance to Afghan colleagues in the fields of medicine, education, agricultural production, additional admittance of the youth of the provinces to educational institutions of the Republics and regions concerned; cooperation of mass media aimed at mutual acquaintance of the population with the traditions and the present-day life of the fraternal peoples, and so on. Besides, as a means of direct assistance, the Soviet Republics and regions give to the Afghan provinces various goods and materials that are particularly needed by one or another province. And these include not only consumer goods, but also machinery for food processing and building construction, for drilling water wells and generating electric energy, for loading and transporting, equipment for workshops and small enterprises, for medical establishments, etc.

It is proposed to open in some provinces special shops where goods from a certain Soviet Republic would be sold. Correspondingly, it is proposed to supply to these Republics the local produce also.

Here is an example of direct assistance of Azerbaijan to the province of Paktika. It includes the gift of materials at a total cost of around 2 million Roubles during the years



Delegations of the provinces: of Oruzgan — at the metallurgical plant in the town of Karaganda, of Zabol — at the exhibition of local-made produce in the town of Chimkent (right), both in Soviet Kazakhstan.

1987-1988; assistance in the projecting and equipment of a boarding school for 200 pupils; assistance in projecting and equipment of furniture workshops; assistance in drilling wells for the supply of water to the population; setting up of a shop, named "Friendship", for selling Azerbaijani goods in the province of Paktika. It is also proposed to study the possibilities of compensational deliveries of local produce to Azerbaijan.

Among the goods gifted to the province there are means of transportation, machinery for drilling wells, assembled chambers and hangars, constructional machinery, electrical machinery, means of communication, equipment for medical establishments and schools, medicines, and so on.

Similar agreements have been signed between this Republic and Paktia province and Khost division.

Of course, not all the questions have been solved yet. It is a new undertaking. But, as the saying goes, a good beginning makes for a good end. And the beginning has already been made that opens up broad vistas of cooperation between the two countries.

A question rises: what has caused such a decentralization of links between the two States? Which gains does it envisage for both the sides? Are the State treaties and agreements not enough?

It should be emphasized that such questions had not been raised by the authorities of the provinces: there they immediately understood all the advantages of direct links. Of course, the general state development plan does exist, which reflects the measures concerning one or another province. The central government defines where and when these or other goods and equipment should be dispatched. But it is also not a secret that not always these priorities are based on deep enough knowledge of real needs of one or another province. Quite often they are ruled by the fact of remoteness from the centre and the consequent possibilities of transportation of goods. The subjective factor in solving similar problems is still quite great. As a result some, especially remote, provinces are considerably lagging behind in their development from other provinces which are in better and more beneficial conditions.

Direct links give more initiative to the local administration in the provinces, enable them to ask and receive the very equipment and those kinds of help which are really needed in the localities. So to say, from the chain of links, in this particular case, the intermediary link is excluded which, at times, due to different reasons is not responsive enough to the



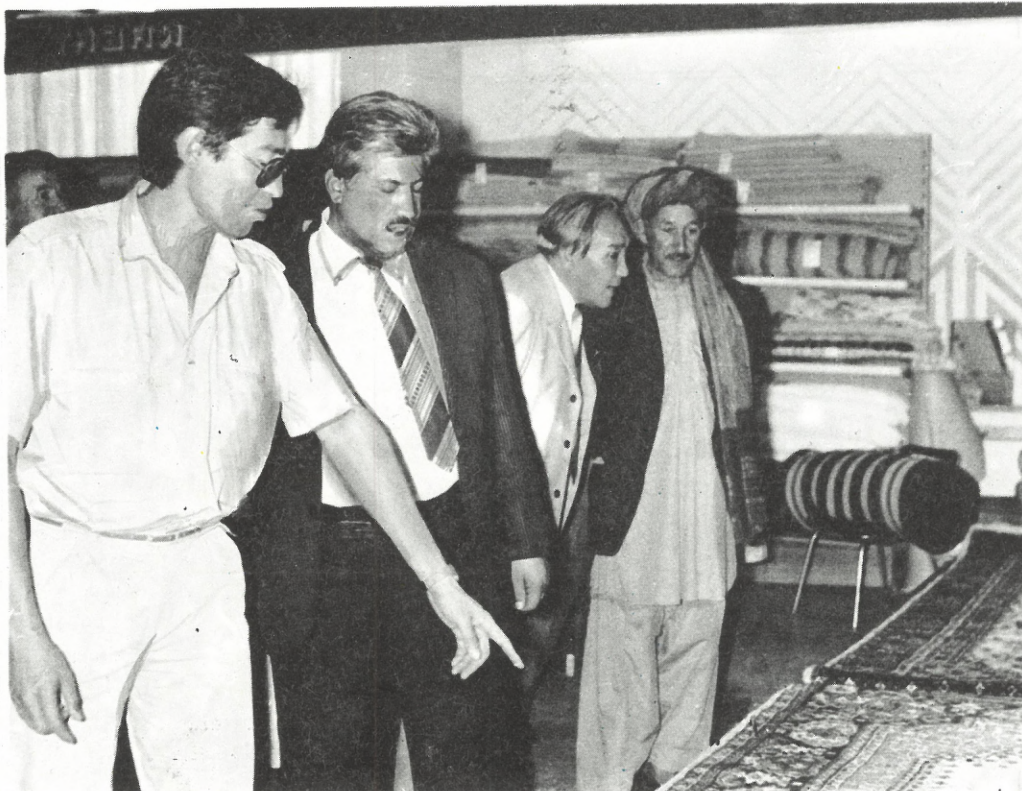
needs of the provinces. Of course, the centralized administration of the economic and social development of the provinces remains in its full command, but their direct links with the Soviet Republics and regions give additional possibilities for ever greater development.

And, of course, it is worth mentioning that such a phenomenon has become possible under the conditions when the reconstruction of economic,

political and social spheres of life is going on in the Soviet Union, in the course of which direct contacts of separate enterprises and establishments with their foreign counterparts are being widely practised.

Summing up, we may say that the beginning to direct contacts has been made, and there is hope that, with the help of their Soviet partners, the development of Afghan provinces will be considerably accelerated.

The party and administrative leaders of Paktika and Paktia provinces and Khost division at a memorial in Baku — the capital of Soviet Azerbaijan



NATIONAL ECONOMY

Jangalak Factory

Our correspondent met with Mohammad Omar, President of Jangalak Factory, one of the most important country's industrial enterprises. Here we present to our readers the main points of this interview.

Jangalak Factory was set up 27 years ago with the assistance of the Soviet Union with initial capital of 175 million Afs and a payroll of 700 workers. Today, the factory, as one of the biggest industrial plants, is functioning with a maximum capital of 700 million Afs and 1,400 workers on its payroll.

In the beginning as many as 60 experts from the Soviet Union helped Afghan engineers and workers in constructing the plant and installing equi-

ipment, while today only eight Soviet specialists assist the workers. These specialists have also played an important role in training professional cadres of the factory. Over 2,011 technical personnel have so far been trained in different fields, each one of whom today independently handles the work in his own field at the factory.

After the April Revolution, the state of the DRA resolved to change the factory into a state remunerative enterprise while earlier it had only been a repairing institution.

It has consistently augmented the volume of production during the hard years after the revolution and has actively contributed to the creation and development of state transport, particularly petroleum transport and metal industries. During these years, the factory has increased the volume of its production by 48.2 per cent and has installed and commissioned over 1,000 petroleum tanks on Tatra, KRAZ and ZIL carriers. Moreover, it has produced 86.2 tons of foundry products, a thousand tons of metal construction materials, non-standard machines and equipment within the same period.

The factory's help in the completion of large projects such as Salang highway, Fertilizers and Thermal Power Plant of Mazar-i-Sharif, the Polytechnic Institute, Jangalak Technical School, Nangarhar irrigation canal, Naghlo power station, KamAZ transport enterprises, the department of petroleum transport and other gigantic projects in the country, is worth mentioning.

At present, the factory has eight

productive, repairing and auxiliary sections. Between them — the metal work section, which is one of the biggest productive units of the factory and mainly produces hangars, reservoirs, mobile tanks with different capacities, bodies of vehicles and other metal wares like cupboards, safes, aluminium utensils and gates.

The tanker manufacturing unit produces 400 tankers a year. Vehicle repairing section is a well-equipped unit of the factory; it repairs and controls the engines of different transport vehicles. The aggregate unit annually produces and commissions 2,600 aggregates of different vehicles, including KamAZ, MAZ and ZIL.

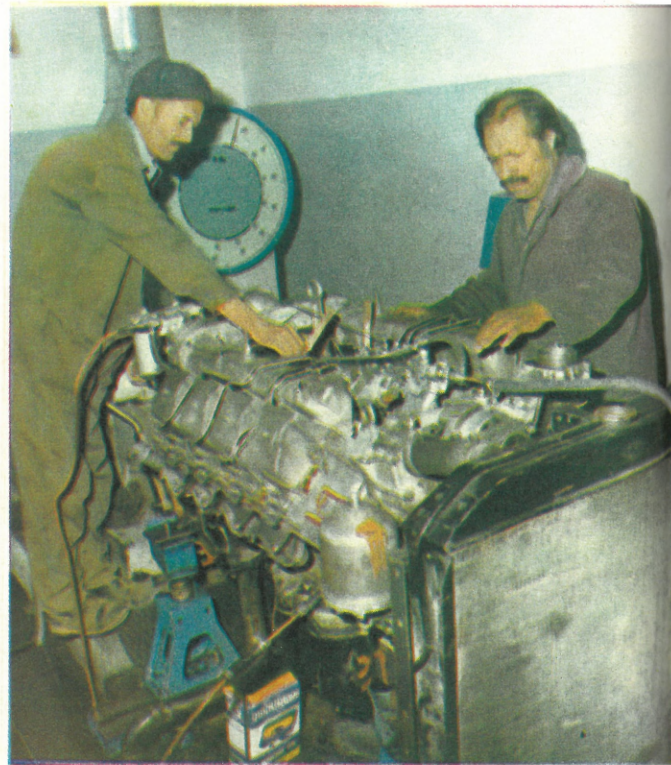
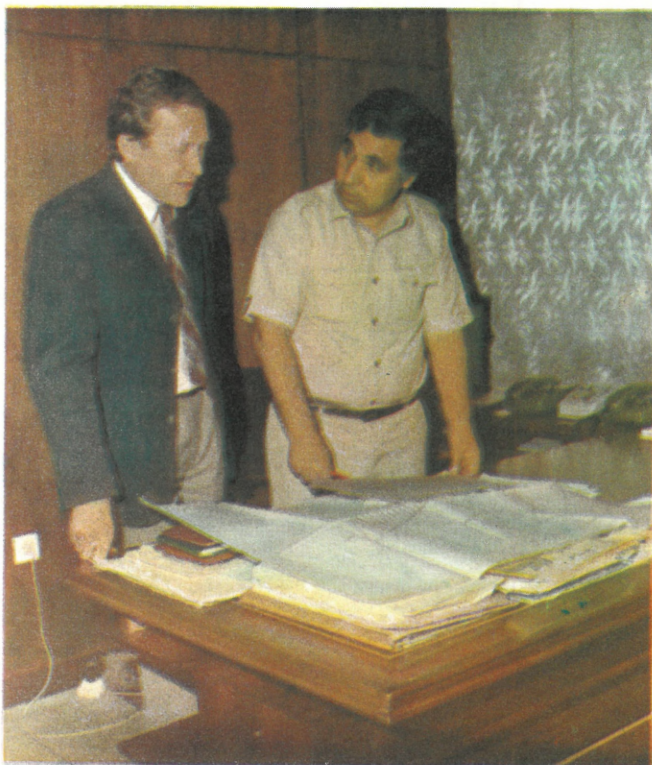
Oxygen production shop has a production capacity of 1,000 cylinders of oxygen per month. It works round the clock. The unit provides oxygen for technical institutions and hospitals of the country.

Electrical repairing shop repairs different kinds of electric motors and coils. The electrical welding of generators also takes place here.

The carpentry workshop of the factory is equipped with modern machines for wood processing; it is operating as an auxiliary unit. The role of painting section of the factory is also of great importance.

Apart from that, Jangalak factory produces different types of diesel water pumps, sowing machines, threshers and other agricultural implements and puts them at the disposal of peasants. Accordingly, it produces spare parts of textile machines, hails, steel beds and other metal ware. The factory also has a contract with the

Mohammad Omar, President of Jangalak factory and Alexander Rovny, Soviet expert



The last check-up of the repaired engine

Ministry of Defence for the supply of aluminium utensils.

The foundry was completed and commissioned in April this year. By November 1987, it will be operating in full swing. The foundry construction work started in 1984 and was completed at a total cost of 307 million Afs from the credit given by the friendly Soviet Union and partially from the state budget. The annual production of the section is 2,120 tons coloured steel. Now this section is producing 73 different kinds of spare parts, including plates that were previously imported. The section envisages to produce, in the near future, cast iron pipes with a length of 2/3 metres of different calibres for drainage system and irrigation purposes. These apparatuses are still imported. This section is one of the most well-equipped units in the region and in the country. All its machines are operating automatically and its forges are operated by electronic system. Over 130 Afghan workers and engineers and two Soviet experts are working in this section. Its annual income exceeds 130 million Afs. The section, which from the production point of view is of immense economic importance, produces 80 per cent of its raw materials indigenously. It plays an important role in the growth of engineering industry.

At present, the volume of annual production of the factory is 330 million Afs. By the end of the first five-year socio-economic plan and completion of its expanding part, the annual production would be worth 500 million Afs.

The trade union of the factory is one of the founders of union movement in the country; it has played an active role in mobilizing workers, both before and after the revolution. At present, all workers and employees of the factory are members of this union and serve in different organizational, defence of work and production, financial, artistic and sports commissions. The union is functioning in eight sections and 40 group organizations under the leadership of the presidium of the union.

Collective agreements are signed every year between factory administration and the union in which both sides discuss their respective tasks and responsibilities, and the implementation of the agreements is regularly controlled.

Apart from rendering moral and material assistance to employees, the union despatches every year 7 to 8 children of deserving workers and two eligible workers to the Soviet Union for rest and recreation.

Over 158 full and probationary members of the PDPA are organized in the primary party organization of the factory, who are working in its administrative, technical and productive sections.

More than 75 members are mobilized in the youth primary organization. Also, 80 women are working under Women's Council of the factory.

The employees of the factory are members of civil defence and self-defence groups and actively safeguard their enterprise.

Like other state employees, the workers and employees of the factory

enjoy all moral and material privileges given by the government. At present, they receive their foodstuffs and consumer goods without any difficulty inside the factory and get them transported easily to their homes.

Apart from raising the capacity of the factory, the expansion section of the factory has prepared the ground for some social activities such as:

To provide further social facilities and assist the workers, a big dining-hall was constructed inside the factory. Residential houses including conference hall, cinema, cultural centre and other offices for social activities were built as well.

Modern and well-equipped shower baths were set up for workers to take shower after work.

To assist women workers and treat worker's families, the factory has set up a kindergarten, a creche and a well-equipped polyclinic. The factory has a rich library housing books on different topics, a sports ground and artistic associations, to enable the workers to spend their leisure time.

After the victory of the Revolution, a number of women were employed to work behind machines. Now over 40 women successfully carry out their duties there.

Likewise, after the Revolution literacy courses were set up in the factory and, so far, over 400 learners have graduated from these courses. Right now, 78 persons are introduced to four literacy courses who, after graduation, would no longer remain illiterate.

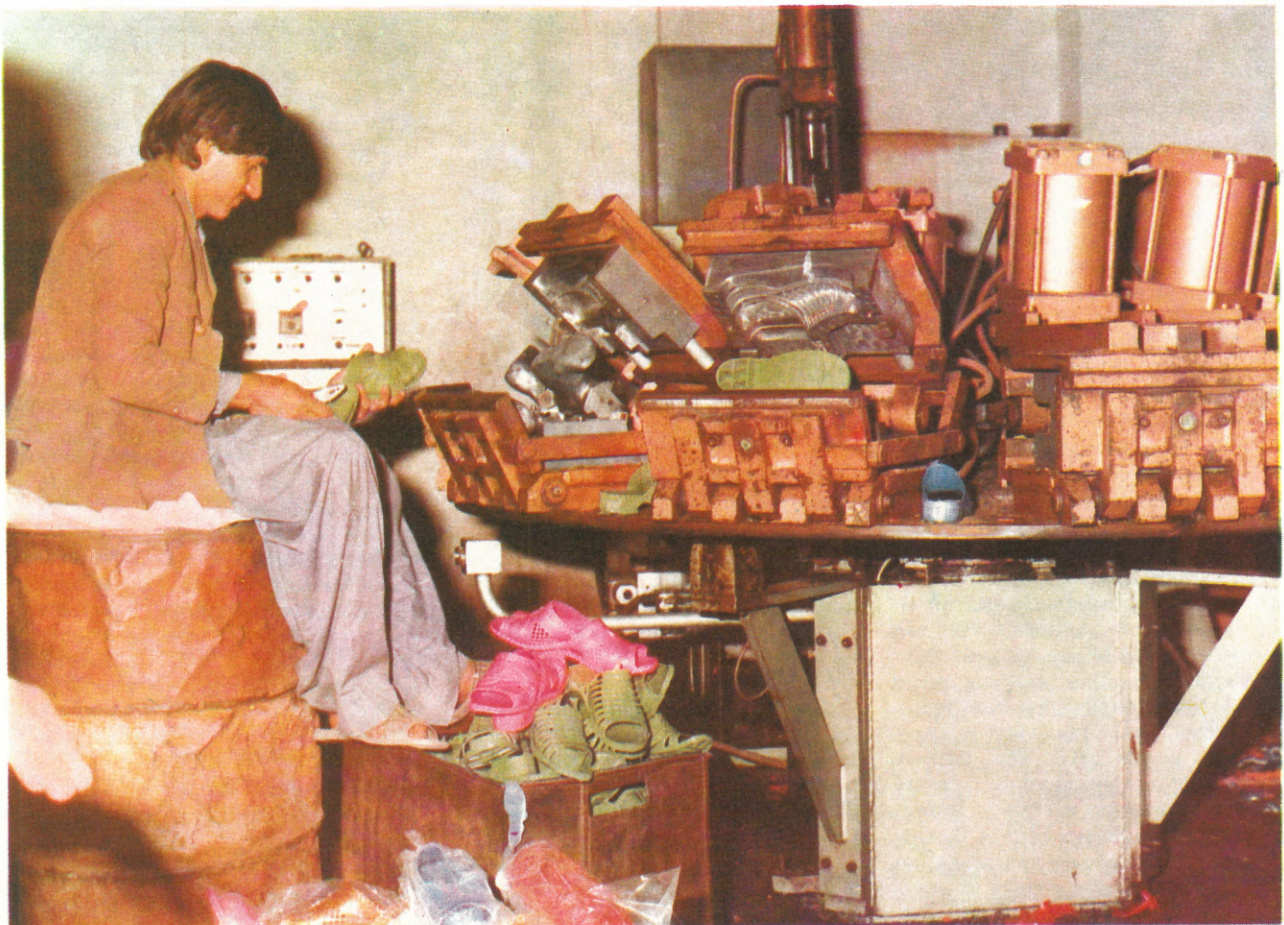
By: Farouq



In one of the workshops of the factory

New foundry was put into operation in the beginning of the current year

Ready
products
before
packing



PRIVATE SECTOR

Watan Plastic

Among various private industrial establishments in the country, one is *Watan Plastic Factory*, deployed in Pull-e-Charkhi — Kabul's suburb.

Being the first factory to put out plastic products, *Watan Plastic* was established in 1970 and began functioning in 1971 with an initial capital of 20 million Afghanis, which by now has amounted to 35 million Afghanis, shared by six brothers.

In the past, the share-holders of the plant had engaged in trade (export and import), used to export dry fruits such as pistachio, almond, etc., and import edible oil, soap and other essential goods needed by the public. Later on they decided to invest their capital in industry and established *Watan Plastic Plant* to meet the needs of the people for plastic products. The plant has been producing varieties of footwear which were imported formerly from abroad against hard currency.

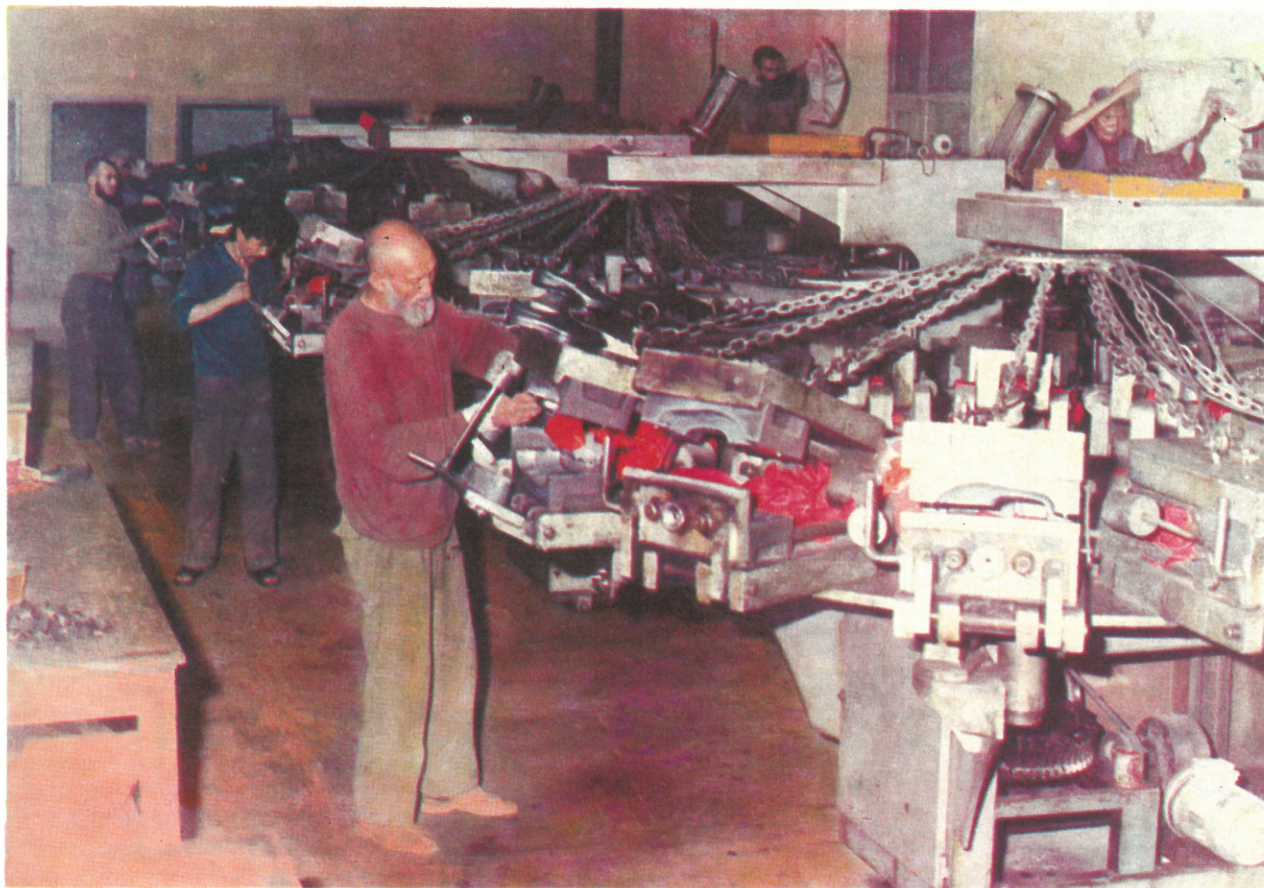
The plant supplies its products according to the seasonal conditions of the country combining superior quality with reasonable price.

The plant owns 10 automatic and semi-automatic machines with a total capacity of 1,200 pairs per hour. The products of *Watan Plastic* are of better quality as compared to the same foreign products and are sold at operate them.

Watan Plastic Factory depends on its own professional personnel for provision and repair of machinery as well as for molds of production and needs no foreign experts. The personnel of the plant help other similar



One of the
share-holders
of *Watan
Plastic*
Sayed Abdul-
Jalil



In the workshop

factories in manufacturing molds of different sizes. Efforts have been made here to employ machines with simpler techniques so that the workers could easily operate them.

Watan Plastic Factory is among the private industrial enterprises which have been able to perform regular work despite the undeclared war imposed by US imperialism on the country.

The factory now has 70 workers on its payroll who work in two shifts.

Watan Plastic Factory gets its raw materials from Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan and Romania.

Last Afghan year, Watan Plastic managed to produce 266,198 pairs of footwear earning over 17.524 million Afghanis through their sale in the market.

Had there not been the eight years of war, the plastic production could have met all the local needs considering the supply and demand, for the number of consumers of such kind of production is high and not many people are able to buy similar foreign products.

Our correspondent, Farouq, met Sayed Abdul Jalil, one of the share-holders and acting head of the plant. This is what he said:

Receiving credits from the Chambers of Commerce and Industries and *Friendship Organization for Assistance and Trade* of the Commerce Ministry, provision of telephone, power, sufficient water and customs exemptions are some examples of the all-round assistance given by the government to all the private entrepreneurs, including Watan Plastic Factory.

Besides, thanks to the Soviet Union, last year raw materials of plastic producing factories were supplied through the Chambers of Commerce and Industries and were given to their owners.

This played a tangible role in raising the level of production as well as improving the positions of private factories.

Watan Plastic has a wide area for its further expansion. As planned, it will venture on producing plastic utensils (plasco) in future for meeting the needs of the people using local raw materials. Also, the plant has a plan to export a part of its products abroad. We are discussing this issue with VOSTOKINTORG Company of the Soviet Union.

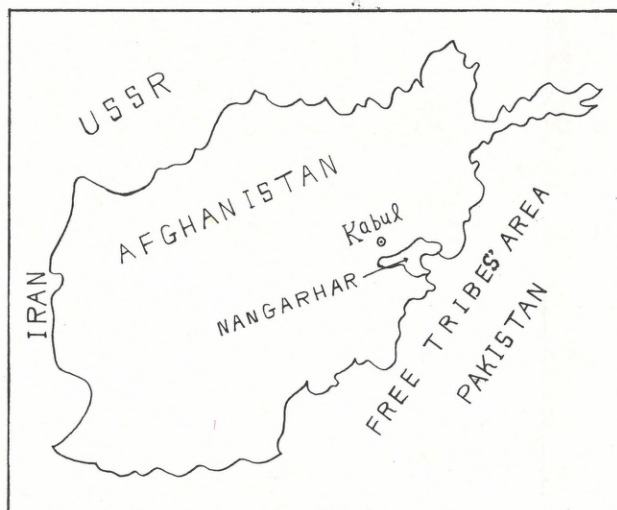
With the implementation of the policy of national reconciliation the consumption will increase because the ground will be paved for transporting the raw materials from the nearest port and dispatching the finished products to the remotest parts of the country helping in the elevation of production of the factory. Hence, our profits will also grow. Using the total capacity of the factory, we can employ, apart from the present personnel, 200 repatriates more in different sections of the factory.

Now the private entrepreneurs are striving to invest in different spheres, improve the private industries and strengthen the national economy by taking advantage of the comprehensive government assistance.

Inspired by the encouragement of the government and the decisions of the first country-wide conference of national entrepreneurs held in Kabul on April 19—20, the cooperation of the Soviet Union in completion of 171 new mixed and private projects as well as participation of the friendly India in the expansion of Kabul Industrial Estate, I myself intend to establish a pharmaceutical factory with an initial capital of 200 million Afghanis in collaboration with Indian private entrepreneurs. My proposal in this respect has already been delivered to the Indian Embassy in Kabul through the Association of Afghan Industries and talks are in progress.

PLACE TO VISIT

Nangarhar



King Habibullah Khan's mausoleum in Jalalabad

Nangarhar is a lush green and beautiful province located in the east of the country. The province, with an area of 7,616 square kilometres, consists of one division, 11 districts, seven sub-districts and 1,153 villages.

The population of Nangarhar is 746,000. Almost 85 per cent of Nangarhar inhabitants are Pashtuns, including the tribes of Ghuljaie, Shirzad, Khoghianai, Wazir, Momand and Shinwar. The rest are Tajiks, Pashaies, Uzbeks, Hindus, and others, who mostly live in Jalalabad city, Khoghianai, Kuzkonar districts and Dara-i-Noor sub-district.

Being a frontier province of the country, Nangarhar borders on Laghman and Konar provinces in the north, the Pashtun Free Tribal Area in the south and the east, and Kabul and Logar provinces in the west.

The capital of Nangarhar, Jalalabad, is located 167 km to the east of Kabul and lies at an altitude of 570 metres above sea level. It has an area of 236 square kilometres and a population of 122 thousand. This city, that includes four precincts and 50 villages, is regarded as the most beautiful city of our country. It has a temperate and pleasant climate. That is why in winter a large number of citizens from different parts of the country go there for having rest.



Heart of Gandhara

The recorded cultural heritage of the Afghans dates back to the time when our country was known as the land of Aryans. The *Rigveda* (*Sacred Knowledge*), the most ancient book of the Aryans, composed of four collections of hymns, prayers and Aryan tales, mentions various geographical names like Kobha, Gandhara, Pactia, Gomati, Kromo, Swasto, which correspond to place-names in south and southeastern Afghanistan today.

The region of Nagarhara, or present-day Nangarhar, was the heart of Gandhara, and the Jalalabad area, like that of Bamyan, Balkh and Kabul, was once a Buddhist centre in the territory of Afghanistan. The city itself had been built much earlier, in the 2nd century B. C. At those times it was called Udyana Pur. The foundation of modern Jalalabad in 1560 is ascribed to Jalaluddin Akbar, Mogul Emperor of India, after whom the city got its name.

Among the most interesting spots of the city itself one can name *Seraj-ul-Emorat*, a magnificent palace originally built by Amir Abdurrahman (1880—1901). The palace was the royal residence of Amir Habibullah and King Amanullah (1919—1929). Fired and looted in November 1928 by Shinwari tribesmen protesting King Amanullah's modernization programme, it is today a burnt out shell.

Another attraction of the city is the *Mausoleum of Amir Habibullah*. Amir Habibullah (1901—1919) was assassinated while on a hunting trip at Qalagush across the river in Laghman province, in February 1919. His mausoleum in Jalalabad is a mosque with a simple cupola enclosed by a low balustrade tastefully open to the beauty of the extensive gardens around it. The tomb is covered with a large carved tombstone of Afghan marble.

Beside him lie his two sons, Inayatullah and Amanullah, both of whom sat upon Kabul's throne. Queen Soraya, M. Tarzi's daughter and King Amanullah's wife, is also buried here.

In the 1930s, at the outskirts of Jalalabad, at *Teppe-Shotor* (Camel's Mound), archaeologists found a large Buddhist temple that dated back to the 2nd century A. D. In thirty years, Afghan specialists carried out excavations there and after some restoration work, an open air museum of Buddhist art was created. This spot is well-known as Hadda. To it came countless pilgrims from every corner of the earth to worship at its many holy temples maintained by thousands of monks and priests living in large monastery complexes.

What made Hadda such a venerated goal for pilgrims? Fortunately, we have three eye-witness accounts written in Chinese, each of which gives a detailed list of the shrines in the area. In the "city" Na-kia-lo-a (i. e., Nangarhar), there was a stupa containing Buddha's tooth relic, and to the north-east of it another stupa and monastery where Buddha's staff lay encased. To the west, another complex contained Buddha's robe. When drought threatened crops, the robe would be taken out so that the "heavens then yielded an abundance of rain". Furthermore, it was in Nangarhar, thousands of years ago in a distant incarnation, that Buddha himself received the prediction of Buddhahood.

To the south-east of "the city" is the land of which the city of Hilo (Hadda) was the centre. Here stood the shrine containing Buddha's skull-bone. A Chinese pilgrim Fahsien thus described his visit to Hadda's principal shrine in the year 420 A. D.:



"In the city of Hilo there is a shrine which contains Buddha's skull-bone, entirely covered with gold-leaf and ornamented with the seven preciousities (gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, cornelian, coral, ruby — author's note). The king of the country deeply venerates the skull-bone; and fearing lest it should be stolen, has appointed eight men of the leading families in the kingdom to hold each of them a seal, with which to seal and guard the shrine and bone. In the early morning, when the eight have all arrived, and each one has inspected his own seal, they open the door; they next wash their hands in scented water, and then bring out the skull-bone which they place on a high altar outside the shrine, resting it on a round block of the seven preciousities and covering it with a bell made of brass, both richly inlaid with pearls and precious stones..."

One of
Jalalabad's
mosques

One hundred years later, in 520 A. D., another pilgrim Sua-yun from Tibet, gives a substantially similar report. By this time some of Buddha's hair as well as the tooth had been enshrined in Jalalabad.

Still another hundred years later, in 632 A. D., the most famous Chinese chronicler, Hsuan-tsang, visited Hadda and made the familiar rounds. This time the devastating depredation of the Hephthalite invasions had taken its toll and the pilgrim sadly remarks that "the sangharmas (religious establishments) are many, but yet the priests are few; the stupas are desolate and ruined." Speaking of Jalalabad he says, "within the city is the ruined foundation of a great stupa. Tradition says that it once contained a tooth of Buddha, and that it was high and of great magnificence. Now it has no tooth, but only the ancient foundations remain."

So it is that today the entire Jalalabad valley is littered with the remains of countless Buddhist ruins. Every spot connected with the Buddha legend had its own complex of religious and monastery buildings, the latter built, usually, around a central, sacred stupa. These stupas were hemispherical domes topped with a series of seven umbrellas, a symbol for royalty, around which the worshipper circumambulated as a part of his religious ritual. In the beginning stupas were raised to cover a grave or to contain a burial relic. Not all stupas contained relics of the dead. Some were raised to honour the memory of a sacred spot or of one departed; some were built simply as tangible expression of devotion, a pilgrim's proof that he had physically visited a holy spot. These votive stupas were generally smaller than the others and many hundreds were frequently clustered in close rings around a large, sacred relic or memorial stupa. At Hadda over 1,000 stupas have been identified, more than half of which have been excavated.

Both the large and small stupas were ornately decorated in a style today called Gandhara art after the geographical area lying, roughly speaking, between the Kunar and Indus Rivers. Gandhara art speaks with the excitement and vigor of a religious revival and its artists lovingly depicted episodes from the life of Buddha in rich detail. Woven in with the Buddhist iconography they realistically portrayed many aspects of the daily life of Gandhara as well as the fascinating range of people who came to worship here. Imaginatively, they also included animals, gargoyles and mythical figures as well.

The artists of Hadda were mainly working in stucco, much of which was painted and gilded. Over 30,000 stucco heads and figurines have been recovered from Hadda stupas, many of which may be studied at Kabul Museum. An impressive collection may also be seen at Musee Guimet in Paris. The Hadda finds date from the 2nd to the 8th centuries A. D., just prior to the Hephthalite incursion.

It is worth mentioning that stucco sculpture of Gandhara greatly differed from that made of stone. This fact may be explained by the influence of Graeco-Bactrian civilization which was a unique amalgamation of the two great cultures. (Stucco was widely used in Greek sculptures).

Unfortunately, several years ago, armed extremists who penetrated into Afghanistan from Pakistan exploded with grenades the Hadda Museum. They almost totally

destroyed the Buddhist temple unearthed there. It was possible to restore later only a part of it. And in spite of the undeclared war the people's state pays still more attention to preservation of the country's cultural relics.

By: Mir Ahmad Joyenda,
Academician of the DRA Academy
of Sciences

Way to Reconciliation

Recently our correspondent visited Nangarhar. Here we give his comments on the life in the province.

What impresses one most of all is that all essential goods, including cereals, fruit, vegetables, clothes, food-stuffs and consumer goods are found in plenty in the crowded bazaars of Jalalabad. Work is normal in state departments, party organs, social organizations and productive institutions of Jalalabad where peace and tranquillity have been ensured. People closely cooperate with the commissions for national reconciliation and strive for establishing peace and embarking on the path of progress.

A scene of a
village life





In spite of the construction of new buildings for social service, schools and productive institutions, like in other parts of the country, one can see around the city and in the districts of the province the remnants of ruins caused by the imposed war of US imperialism. Farm fields have been changed into arid lands, and *madrassas* that once used to give knowledge to hundreds of children of the province, have been destroyed and damaged. A number of mosques and holy places have been razed to the ground as a result of this devastating war. In listing these destructions, one can name, for example, *Moi Mubarak* (the Shrine of the Prophet's Hair) and Akhond Musa Mosque. Able hands of the youth, hard work and formidable efforts of the people and practical strides for peace are needed to heal the wounds and repair the destructions caused by the war.

Now the policy of national reconciliation is being successfully put into practice in the villages and towns of the province with the active participation of the people and the cooperation of party organs and social organizations. **Wali Mohammad Ziarmal**, *Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Council of People's Deputies and the Commission for National Reconciliation of Nangarhar province*, explaining the work and activity of his commission said: "The Commission for National Reconciliation of the province was set up this January, and so far, 150 NR commissions have been set up in the villages and other places of the province. As many as 2,305 reputed local figures, *ulema* and clergymen, former opponents and repatriates are members of these commissions. Thanks to the efforts made by the members of these commissions, nine opposition armed groups, comprising 209 armed men, responding to the call for peace, joined the process of national reconciliation. By setting up security forces, they are practically defending the Revolution and the process of reconciliation.

Right now, contacts have been established with over 100 big and small opposition armed groups of 1,800 members, and a dialogue is going on with them. 2,844 families, comprising 13,473 members have returned from abroad and resumed their peaceful life in the villages. Out of the above, 653 families, comprising 1,974 mem-

bers, after a brief stay in the peace guest house of Jalalabad city, have been transported by air and road, free of charge, to their native provinces.

Two hundred and nine children of repatriates have been introduced to schools by the Commission for National Reconciliation, and 22 persons, who had deserted their tasks earlier, have been re-employed by their previous employers. In the light of the policy of national reconciliation, 654 prisoners have been released. Their release has left a positive impact on the people and increased their trust in the genuineness of the national reconciliation policy.

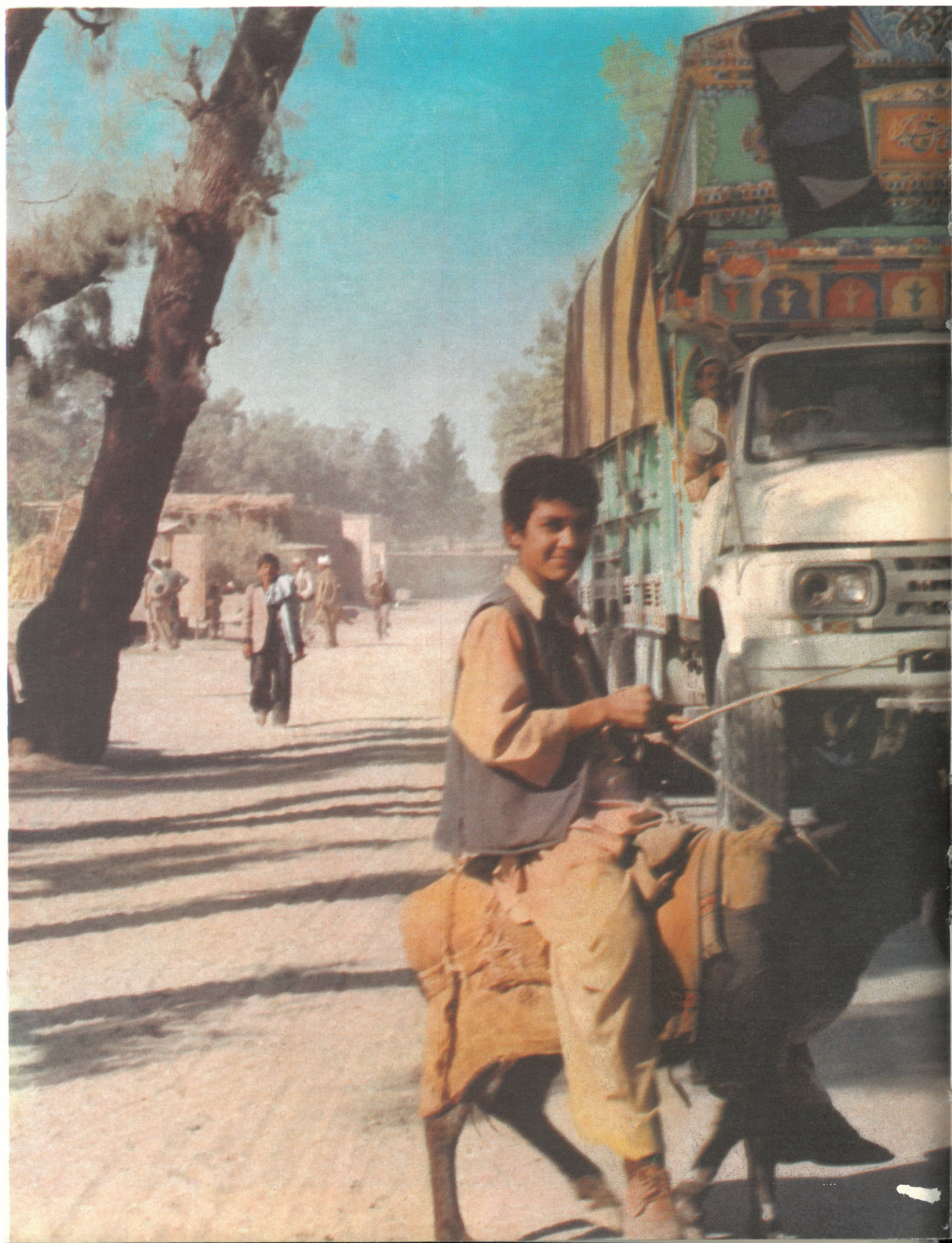
Commissions for national reconciliation have, so far, held three peace jirgahs enrolling influential figures, tribal heads and clergymen. The call of peace has been conveyed across the border, and contacts have been established with the opposition armed groups through these jirgahs.

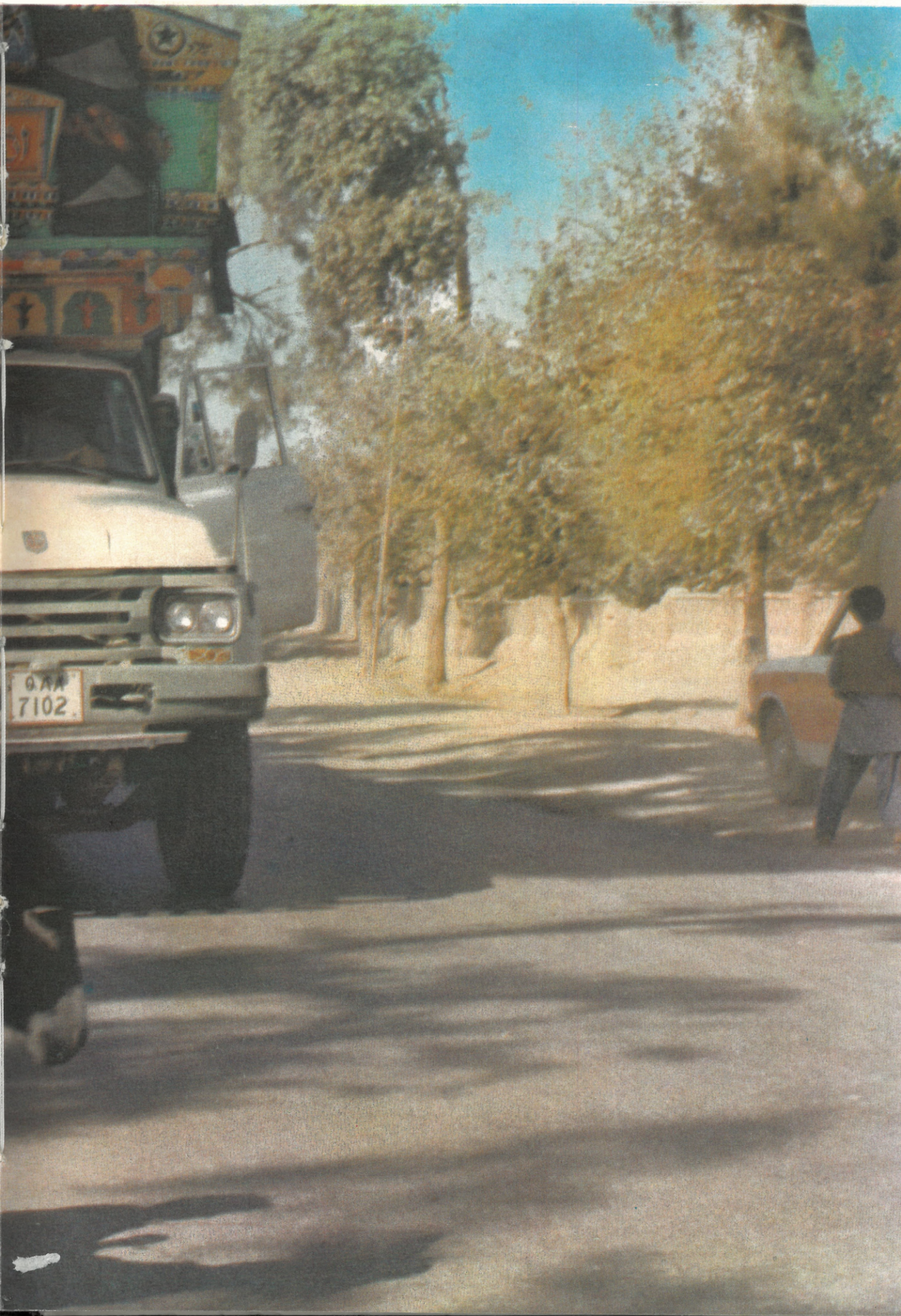
However, it must be said with regret that the government of Pakistan and Afghan extremist groups create hurdles in the way of return of repatriates.

Also, to convey the call for peace to the people living in remote areas, peace caravans have been organized with the cooperation of provincial party committee, social organizations and the Council of Ulema and Clergy of Nangarhar Province and sent to all districts, sub-districts and other localities. In meetings and gatherings people, while expressing their support to the policy of national reconciliation, pledge before peace caravans to repair the houses of repatriates that were damaged as a result of the war and other various reasons, through voluntary work and help them to cultivate and harvest their crops. For instance, the people have repaired, through organizing programmes of voluntary work, the houses of repatriates in Kozkonar and Goshta districts, Samar Kheil village and Behsod region and have given them essential goods free of charge.

After the proclamation of the policy of national reconciliation, Jalalabad city, Goshta, Momandara and Samar Kheil districts, as well as the centre of Shinwar division were announced peace zones by the Commission for National Reconciliation of Nangarhar province. The

In the pasture





Pakistani truck on one of Jalalabad's roads: the way is open for merchandise



At an olive-processing factory in Nangarhar

opposition armed groups can freely visit these regions and hold talks with party and state officials of the province every Tuesday.

So far, two groups (comprising 40 persons), visited Jalalabad city to meet with the party and state officials. Of them, 20 joined the policy of national reconciliation after visiting Jalalabad.

After the proclamation of the policy of national accord, a grand meeting was held in Jalalabad attended by 800 repatriates and people of Nangarhar province, and Najib, General Secretary of the PDPA CC. Najib's participation in the meeting left positive impact on the Nangarhar citizens, particularly the repatriates.

To welcome the repatriates, a reception commission, including members of party, social organizations, members of the Council of Ulema and Clergy and commissions for national reconciliation, was set up in Torkham port. The commission serves the repatriates round the clock and provides them with transport and lodging facilities.

A peace guest house for the repatriates was set up in Jalalabad city at a total cost of over 22 million Afghanis. Besides bedrooms, the guest house is equipped with a health clinic, a library, TV-sets, a video cassette and radio-sets. A similar guest house is at the disposal of the repatriates in Khost division.

Assistance Rendered

To render timely assistance to the repatriates, the gratis aid goods from the Soviet Union, including 600 tons of flour, 40 tons of edible oil, 30,000 kg of sugar, 18,000 cakes of soap, 4,000 dozens of matches, 2,000 pairs of footwear, 410 spades, 20,000 metres of cloth, 19,000 scarves, 500 sets of stoves, 800 pots, 2,000 blankets and 20,000 note-books, have been given to the repatriates and other people with low income since the proclamation of the policy of national reconciliation by

the commissions for national reconciliation, army and Tsarandoy units of the province.

Moreover, workers and employees of state departments, productive, social service institutions and servicemen of the units of the army, Tsarandoy and state security of the province donated a sum of two million Afghanis to the Commission for National Reconciliation of Nangarhar. The sum was transferred to account No. 50000, i.e., Repatriates' Fund.

To welcome the policy of national reconciliation, a programme of voluntary work was organized in all productive, educational institutions, villages and towns of the province. As a result, an amount of 400,000 Afs. was earned for the Repatriates' Fund.

Consolidation of People's Power

The elections of people's deputies to local organs of state power and administration are being successfully implemented in Nangarhar province. The second phase of elections has, so far, been implemented in 321 villages in which the people have elected 914 persons as their credible deputies to local organs of state power and administration. Elections were also held in 194 villages after the programme of national reconciliation, in which 314 people were elected as people's deputies from among the influential figures and elders of the tribes and clans, including some of those who had previously been opposing people's power.

To further consolidate the people's power in the province, to maintain highways, educational and productive institutions and to shield the borders, about ten thousand persons have voluntarily joined border militia, tribal battalions, tribal detachments and civil defence groups, of which about two thousand have joined the armed civil forces in the light of the policy of national reconciliation.

In addition, since the inception of the peace policy, more than four thousand youths have been enlisted in the ranks of the army, Tsarandoy and state security. Of these, 580 are repatriates.

In the light of the policy of national accord, one tribal battalion and two units of border militia have been recently set up in Surkhrod and Kushta districts to defend the localities along with other forces and not to allow armed opposition groups to hamper the peace policy there.

Education

The state of education has been improved under peace policy. Currently, 22 girls' and boys' lycees, 18 intermediate schools, 38 primary schools and three kindergartens are active in Nangarhar province with a total membership of 45,000 students. Teaching is conducted by about 1,500 experienced teachers. As many as 7,943 students have been admitted during the current year.

In addition, Institute of Pedagogy, Najmulmadaris Teachers' Training College and three professional schools are functioning in the province.

Talking about the roles of these, **Jahish**, head of the Education Department of Nangarhar Provincial Party Committee, said: "Four new schools, costing 24,042,000 Afghanis have been built in the post-revolution years and five schools were rebuilt and repaired in the province. Another six schools destroyed by extremists are under construction, costing 16 million Afghanis, and would be completed by the end of the current year. With these schools constructed, 7,000 students would be able to study there.

To take care of the children of martyrs of the revolution the construction of the building of Nangarhar children's home was started in 1986. The building, costing 156 million Afghanis, will be completed and commissioned during the current year.

To support the policy of national reconciliation, a school named after peace was set up in July 1987 in Shinwar division in which 30 children of repatriates are studying now.

The literacy campaign is successfully continuing in Nangarhar. 5,234 learners have so far become literate. Currently there are 1,337 literacy courses with 25,000 pupils studying in the province who are taught by 1,195 volunteer and 103 official teachers.

A supplementary and functional schools are also functioning in the centre of Jalalabad for workers of productive institutions.

In addition, after the April Revolution, the second university named after Bayazid Roshan, was set up in Nangarhar province, from which so far, 700 students have graduated. At present, there are five colleges in the university including those of agriculture, economics, education, literature and engineering. Over 1,000 students study there. The preparatory and workers' departments and a night college are also functioning under the university.

Public Health

Health services are practically rendered in this province. There are five hospitals, with 475 beds, in the province. The doctors and medical staff are always ready

Music needs not too many words. A song of friendship





Presents to children in a kindergarten

At a girl's school in Nangarhar

to render any assistance in the treatment of the people there. To increase the number of young doctors, the Faculty of Medicine was founded in the province. Currently, over 600 students are studying there with the help of 91 teachers. Students are trained in the field of internal medicine, pediatrics, surgery and neurology.

"Nine health centres have started functioning in Nazyan, Paticot, Achin, Gushta, Rodat and Kama districts. For rendering better medical services, a clinic was recently set up in Jalalabad city", said the head of the Health Department of the province.

To examine and treat the people of the province, 15 mobile groups along with peace caravans of the commissions for national reconciliation have travelled in all districts, sub-districts and villages of the province and have distributed medicines, worth 1,038,000 Afghanis to patients.

Likewise, in the campaign against malaria, launched after the Revolution, medicine was sprayed throughout the province, and a round 80 per cent of malaria has surely been liquidated there.

It is planned to build two health centres in the current year in two border districts of Gushta and Momand Dara at a cost of eight million Afghanis. The construction of a 20-bed hospital at a cost of 16 million Afs is under way in Shinwar division which should be completed and commissioned by the end of this year.

"Apart from that, many other social services have been carried out in the province. Two sets of diesel generators, with a capacity of 140 KW power, were installed last year for electrification of Momand, Nazyan and other districts. At a cost of four million Afs two retail stores were set up in Rodat district and Shinwar division", said **Rahmatullah**, head of Publicity and Culture Department of Nangarhar Provincial Party Committee.

It is also envisaged to install a telephone station in the second quarter of the current year in Torkham through which telephone contacts would be established between Khogiani, Hessarak and Shirzad districts, Jalalabad and Kabul.

The roads of the province destroyed by extremists have been asphalted, and repair work would be completed by the end of the year.

The establishment of retail stores in the districts, reactivation of state transport in Jalalabad city, creation and assembling of local radio and TV stations are the other important achievements of the current year. People



have resumed their peaceful life and tirelessly endeavour for construction of a prosperous society.

Economy

The economic activities of the people of Nangarhar province are mostly centred on agriculture and cattle breeding and about 85 per cent of the people are busy in these fields. They cultivate an area of 74,000 hectares of land. Due to a good climate, the peasants collect two harvests annually. The main agricultural products are wheat, rice, corn, bean, etc. Sugarcane is very important among the industrial plants. An area of 32,550 hectares has been cultivated with wheat, corn, and rice in the spring sowing campaign of this year. Over 2,402 tons of fertilizers as well as pesticides at a cost of 408,023 Afghanis have been distributed to the peasants within the same period. Also, 336,600 Afghanis have been given to the peasants as credit through the Agricultural Development Bank. To help the peasants and to promote mechanized agriculture, an agricultural mechanized unit was set up in 1986. At present, it has 10 tractors, combine harvesters and threshers, which will be put at the disposal of the peasants at a low cost.

The climate of the province is conducive to different kinds of fruit. A considerable growth has become possible in the level of production of fruit by establishing farms and new gardens.

Nangarhar Irrigation Complex is one of the important establishments of the province. It has been constructed through the economic and technical assistance of the Soviet Union for expansion of agricultural lands and elimination of water problems as well as promotion of agricultural mechanized farms. Gardens of olive and citrus have been laid out in the farms of the complex. Its products are used in olive cannery which was set up within the framework of the project in 1984.

The Darunta hydro-power station, with a capacity of 11,500 KW, has been also constructed with the assistance of the Soviet Union. In addition to the houses, the station also supplies power for the 13 industrial enterprises such as textile mill, a plastic factory, a juice factory, a confectionary and other enterprises. In the light of the policy of the national reconciliation the private entrepreneurs of the province invested more willingly their capitals which would serve the interests of the national economy.

Afridi, head of the *Economic Department of Nangarhar Provincial Party Committee* said in this regard: "After the proclamation of the national reconciliation policy, two plastic and one juice factories, as well as one confectionary cooperative have started functioning in the province. The cooperative produces four tons of candy daily. To encourage and improve the activity of the factories, the state has assisted them with 5 million Afghanis from its development budget.

"To establish new industrial factories and enterprises, 100 hectares of land named Industrial Park has been formed on the area 8 km south of Jalalabad city.

"An asphalt factory has been set up in the state sector after the declaration of NR policy. The factory consists of two sections, providing asphalt and macadam. The production capacity of the factory is 20 tons of asphalt and macadam per hour.

"According to the five-year socio-economic plan, 56 different projects will be rehabilitated, repaired or newly set up this year at a cost of 360 million Afghanis."

As in other provinces of the country, handicrafts are popular in Nangarhar. Carpentry, dyeing, pottery, tailoring etc., are among the main handicrafts here. Manufacturing woolen and cotton articles is also a traditional occupation of the residents of the province. These handicrafts are more popular in Rodat, Sorkh Rod and Khogiani districts of the province.

By Ibrahim

RELIGION

Recitation of Holy Koran

International contest for recitation of the holy Koran was held for the first time in May 1987 in Kabul city, the capital of the DRA. Similar contests have also been organized in Malaysia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries of the world. The previous contest was organized in 1986 in the Republic of India. The first diploma of that contest was awarded to Afghan Koran recitor Barakatullah Salim.

The last contest was held in Kabul city for two days by the government at the initiative of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Religious Trusts and the Council of Ulema and Clergy of the DRA in the Mailma Pal Hotel.

In addition to Afghan *qaris* (recitors of the holy Koran), a number of *qaris* from Islamic countries and the Uzbek SSR had taken part in the contest. A six-member jury from different countries evaluated the contestant *qaris* on the basis of certain rules and regulations required for best recitation of the holy Koran. Each *qari* had to recite the assigned verses in 15 minutes observing all requirements and principles.

According to a careful and subtle assessment made by the jury, Afghan Koran recitor, **Abdul Mobin** stood first. He won the first diploma and cash prize of 150,000 Afs. Also, Qari Ahmad from the Socialist Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Qari Mohammad Shafi Omari from the Syrian Arab Republic stood in the second and third positions respectively and cash prizes of Afs. 100,000 and 50,000 were awarded to them. The gifts including one volume of the holy Koran, one prayer rug etc., were also distributed to all *qaris* who participated in this contest and to the jury members by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Religious Trusts of the DRA.

Qari Abdul Mobin is a 14th-grade student of Abu Hanifa High Madrassa. He has recited for 12 years the holy Koran. He stood fourth in the holy Koran recitation contest held in India last year. He won the third position in the contest held in Wazir Akbar Khan mosque of Kabul city for selecting *qaris* for this international contest and finally he became first in this contest.

This young *qari* who can recite the holy Koran with euphony, has been trained by Qari Barakatullah Salim, a renowned Koran recitor of the country.

During the Koran recitation



It the
language lab
of the Watan
school



CHILDREN

Motherland Takes Care of Children

In the vicinity of Afshar mountain, west of Kabul city, there is an institution where everything is done to make its inhabitants happy. It is *Watan Children's Home*, established six years ago, mostly for the children whose parents gave their lives for the Revolution or whose parents could not look after them due to economic reasons. Over 1,200 children enjoy the warmth of affection and kindness in this Home. There are, at present, 15 children's homes functioning in the country where about 2.5 thousand children live and receive their education.

At the entrance to *Watan Children's Home* one comes across the motto "Do not let children be deprived of their parents' affection". Indeed,

Children's
Day's celeb-
rations make
everybody
happy



in the country there are hundreds and thousands of orphaned children. Most of these children have lost their parents as a result of the undeclared imperialist war.

Children from different parts of the country, belonging to different nationalities have gathered in this home as if they were children of one family.

We entered a classroom. The pupils were attentively listening to the teacher. In this home they receive textbooks, pens, paper, notebooks, etc., free of charge. The children do not have to worry about food, clothing etc. Everything is provided by the state for them.

The home has three sections: a creche, a kindergarten and a school. Experienced teachers look after the children and try to do their best to make them forget the horrors which most of them have witnessed. Over 160 small children who are being looked after in the creche and kindergarten of the Home, are everybody's pets and actually teachers here do not feel any difficulty in finding extra helping hands. Thus, everybody's attention to each other makes the children forget that they are orphans.

Every day here starts with morning exercises done collectively in the Home's sports-grounds. Daily classes start at 8:00 a.m. with the singing of



In the workshop



A few last minutes together before going to bed



Solar energy collectors installed in the children's home

the national anthem. Classes continue till 1:00 p.m. During the interval children have their second breakfast consisting mostly of fruit and at 11:30 a.m. they have their lunch. From 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. they rest and then have some time for entertainment.

The school of the Home is well-equipped with modern facilities and teaching materials donated by the

friendly country, the Soviet Union. Habibullah, a fourth-grade pupil of the school said: "Here we have all necessary things for our studies and besides our teachers treat us as if we were their own children. They guide us in all our problems, therefore, I could become the best pupil of my form".

The school was opened in 1981

with 410 students. Now 1,048 students are learning from the first up to the 10th grades. Teaching is conducted by 62 qualified teachers. In addition to Afghan teachers, 10 foreign experts also help children in different sections.

So far, no students have graduated from the 10th grade of the school but a given number of the 5th and 6th-grade students were introduced to other institutions to acquire education. For example, 60 boys from the 6th grade were introduced to the Military School in 1986.

Likewise, 200 7th and 9th-grade students were introduced to technical and vocational schools of the country. Also, 98 students of the 7th, 8th and 9th grades were sent abroad, to the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia last year.

In the curriculum of the school, vocational subjects such as engraving, carpet-weaving, sewing, locksmithy, carpentry, typing, drawing, shoe-making and for the girls home management are also taught besides the syllabus of the Ministry of Education. At present, 200 pupils are busy with acquiring vocational training and have special teachers.

A lot of time is spared for sports and healthy upbringing of the children here. Sport teams of football, volleyball, basketball and gymnastics are active under the guidance of experienced instructors. Students learn music also, and keen attention is paid to the growth of their talents and culture.

Watan Children's Home has a mo-



At a music class



Playing room
of the Home's
kindergarten

dern-facilitated dormitory. Rooms are light and comfortable. The floors are covered with carpets and the beds are arranged neatly with nice blankets and clean bed sheets. Each room has special facilities for recreation such as chess-boards, carromboard, etc.

In one room we saw several children 7—10 years old, sitting near a heater and talking to each other. Some others were busy studying. Two children were playing chess in another corner.

Shah Sayed, a boy of 10 from Jabul Saraj district, Parwan province, said: "My father's name was Mohammad Naim. He was a mason who earned his livelihood by working. But unfortunately he was killed in 1980. I joined this school in 1981. It is the sixth year that I am here and am living comfortably. Good board and lodging are provided and I study and get my education here. The affection and kindness of our teachers made me forget my grief. I study proudly to serve our people".

The Home has well-equipped library with different books for children. Moreover, a new teaching block for 2,000 students has been constructed and will be opened in the near future.

A well-equipped clinic with modern medical instruments is functioning in the Home. The clinic has 60

beds, 4 doctors, 11 nurses, including a nursing director and a pharmacist.

For the sound upbringing of the children, an agricultural farm has been constructed on an area of 250 jeribs of land of which 20 jeribs are cultivated by the children themselves.

The Home also has a poultry farm, housing 2,000 broiler and hens where at present 700 chickens of Indian origin are under nurture.

The General Directorate of *Watan* Children's Homes has taken positive steps for the implementation of the first five-year socio-economic development plan. The plan of establishing such children's homes in all the provinces is an example of the same. The department has set up two homes in Baghlan and Samangan provinces in 1986. Children are joining the homes and enjoy all the moral and material advantages provided there. The teachers and staff of the homes look after the children with a great deal of affection and love. The process of attracting orphaned children to such homes is continuing. For example, since the beginning of the year, around 300 children have been taken in the custody of the centre and the provinces.

At the requests of their parents, 205 children were returned to their families.

The General Directorate of *Watan* Children's Homes always enjoys assistance of the state and the friendly countries. Local institutions have rendered assistance at a cost of 20 million Afs. and foreign countries such as the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and India have given Afs. 80 million to the Directorate so far. The Directorate spends Afs. 84 million annually for the children's homes from the state budget.

The *Watan* Children's Home with its indefatigable service fills a great social need. It is taking positive and constructive strides for the sound upbringing of the children of martyrs and parentless children of the country who would become the builders of tomorrow.

Rahmatullah, one of the senior pupils of the Home who is studying in the Soviet Union and has come to Kabul during his vacations said: "My father was martyred by the enemies of the revolution and my mother who is a worker was not able to support the family alone, so my brother and I joined the home. I was in the 9th grade at that time and I was introduced to the educational working fellowship for three years. It is the second year that I am continuing my education in power field. I have learned a lot there and decided to complete my higher education in the Soviet Union".

DEFENDERS OF REVOLUTION

How to Become a Hero

Very often, in everyday life, a hero is a modest and quite common person. And it is only under certain circumstances that the best and noblest qualities of a human being raise him over fear and lead to victory. A hero always raises the banner of freedom over the summits of history.

The history of our country has thrown up thousands of such revolutionary and national heroes. The sages of their heroism have brought unforgettable glory to Afghan history.

Mohammad Juma is one of such valorous heroes of the country. Recently awarded the title of "Hero of the DRA" by the Central Committee of the PDPA, Mohammad Juma has fought in the front-line of the struggle against American imperialists and their stooges who have been waging monstrous war against our homeland for the last 8 years. Now he is a brave officer of his regiment. He said: "In the combat operations against enemy

es of the revolution and people one must not feel afraid or defeated and must not forget guarding the commander of the regiment. As to me, I always try to be in the front of my fellow warriors and inspire them with my own deeds".

Speaking about himself, Mohammad Juma said: "I was only four years old when I lost my father. He was mercilessly killed by the chieftain of the village for... refusing to do unpaid work at his land. The chieftain also threw my younger brother into the fire. Then my mother and I were all alone. We lost all hope in life. My mother became a house-maid in the home of a landlord, but as I can remember, all the time she was the most loving mother. When I was 10, my mother died. And I was left all alone in the world. I also had to start work in the house of the landlord. When I grew up, I left Ghazni and went to Kandahar province where I managed to find a relatively better job.

"With the victory of the April Revolution I came over to Kabul and voluntarily joined the ranks of the armed forces in one of the commando units as a soldier".

He has participated in combat operations in almost all the provinces of the country. He went on to say: "I was ordered to destroy the jail of



Ahmad Shah Masud, an extremist leader in Panjshir valley. The commander of our unit was killed in the battle with Ahmad Shah Masud's men. All communication with the headquarters of our regiment was also cut out. For three days we remained besieged by the enemy. On the fourth day, it was decided to restore the liaison with the headquarters. So I had to crawl for seven kilometres, until I reached the mount and re-established communication.



Juma Khan
enjoying tea
with the
family

"They ordered me to take up the position of the commander of the unit. I moved forward employing all my tactics, as well as with the help of what the paratroopers brought us."

"I was informed that the extremists entrenched in a fort located in the middle of the valley, were firing at us. Along with some volunteers, I moved towards the fort. Having approached to the fort we found out that the gate was locked, and that they were firing at us from a window. Hidden by the wall, one of us threw a grenade through the window into the fort. The firing stopped. Then we climbed up the window and saw that four men were dead while the remaining two had fled. We caught them in the courtyard. Along with them we captured four units of Ziko-1, 6 rocket-launchers, 12 Chinese and US radio monitors, 12 sacks full of propaganda material, 68 boxes of bullets and food-stuffs."

Mohammad Juma has participated in another major operation of the DRA armed forces in Zhawara valley (Khost division), called by the extremists "invincible fort". He recollects his experience as follows:

"Along with my soldiers, I descended into the valley. We were fighting for three consecutive days till all our bullets were exhausted and we were ordered to desert the valley. I

hid myself on a tree. In three days, I made an attempt to get out of the enemy's territory. I worked my way through the thick black forest bare-footed until I reached a mountainous fort while enemies were searching for me in the valley. I continued walking when I understood that they were enemies. I turned to an unknown path and continued walking.

"I wandered in the mountains and lost my way. No village or fort was in sight, so by the evening I felt that my energy was leaving me, and besides one of my hands was wounded. I sat on a stone in a pensive mood. But finally I managed to compose myself and stood up and went. Having covered a long distance, I fell down and then I started to creep. I do not know how I spent the night in that mountainous area. Hunger and thirst had weakened me. In the morning, to my surprise, I found myself to be near a spring. I drank the water thirstily and soaked my face in it. Having taken some rest I wandered about all the day. Exerting all my strength, I did not stop walking even during the night. Towards dawn, I heard silenced voices of the guardians of a frontier post. I cried out, "I am a friend. Help me please!" Soon I found myself surrounded by the soldiers of the contingent asking me questions. I told them about all the adventures and showed

them the place of the enemy. After a short rest I rose up again and led the soldiers to the place. We besieged the area. This time we moved into the valley and conquered the so-called "invincible Zhawara". All our enemies took to flight. The security forces captured 100 units of Ziko-1, 12 Chinese mortars, 6 boxes of bullets, 50 boxes of anti-gas masks, 35 *Stingers* with their units, 200 ground-to-air rockets and depots of ammunition."

Mohammad Juma was born 26 years ago in a peasant family in Ghazni province. So far, he has participated in 488 combat operations against enemies of the revolution and the homeland. He had completed his military service in a commando regiment and then decided to continue his service in the army voluntarily, and in 1985 he was promoted to the rank of a non-commissioned officer in the armed forces. His heroic and selfless struggle earned him one medal of the PDPA CC, and 2 medals of the DYO. He is also a winner of 6 other medals for his brave participation in combat operations. He has also received four promotions and a residential apartment and several cash prizes from the Defence Ministry.

Juma joined the PDPA in 1983. As an Afghan representative, he participated in the 12th Youth International Forum in Moscow.

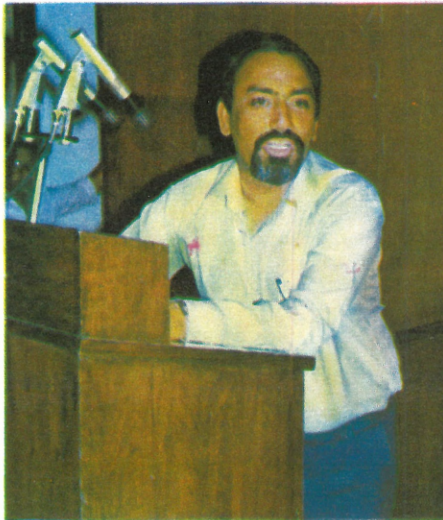
LETTERS

Reader's Opinion

Editor-in-Chief,
Afghanistan Today,
Kabul

Sir,

In March 1987, I had the privilege of visiting your beautiful country with great Indian jurist Mr. Justice V. R. Krishna Iyer. At the outset I must confess that your country is absolutely different from what I had perceived through the media. Afghanistan has made tremendous progress during last nine years. The most impressive feature of our finding was the care which children receive. During our ten-day visit we could not find even a single child without well protected clothes or without shoes. Child care centre at Bread factory in Kabul is so well-maintained that even very rich people in the West cannot look after their children so well. We in India have laws for creche in every big industry but even in next fifty years we will not be able to provide so beautiful creches as you have done.



We spoke to children in *Watan* school (where children of Afghan martyrs study); they were cheerful, proud of their parents who laid their lives for the motherland and were still singing songs of peace.

Afghanistan has also impressed me by its emancipated women. Students of Kabul University are more fashionable than the Delhi University girls. Apart from western dresses and make-up, girls are articulated and receive education in science, arts, culture, architecture, engineering and medicine along with boys in coeducational institutions. The revolution has certainly brought about their emancipation. They hate to be treated as slaves or second-class citizens in a male-dominated

world. Today, they take pride in working with men as equal partners in progress. Today they have several job opportunities and the government also realizes that it cannot ignore the fifty per cent population from contributing their might to the national development. Economic security will help Afghan women to fight century-old injustices and exploitation.

Life in Afghanistan is peaceful and normal, but away from the cities the fear of mis-guided and anti-social terrorists persists. The biggest enemy of Afghanistan is western media which only give distorted picture full of lies. *Journal Afghanistan Today* is informative, educative and very lucid to read. Gains of the revolution cannot be bypassed by any regime in the times to come.

I would be too pleased to write for *Afghanistan Today*. Afghan people are very affectionate, hospitable and innocent. With love and affection they can do anything but with force they will fight for hundred years and will not yield.

Yours sincerely,

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WOMEN

Princess of Balkh

Love is a boundless sea where swimming for a tormented being is impracticable.

Most probably more than a thousand years ago Balkh — "the Mother of Cities" — was prodigious, prosperous and rich. At that time, the half-extinguished fire-temples were still reminding one of the Zoroastrian golden age. Stone stupas and crumbling walls encircling citadel of the City of Buddhism, the dusty ancient route and resting point for the mosques of

the glorious Islamic era and tragic ruins of the city, remind one of its downfall during the wild invasion of Genghis Khan and his descendants.

Balkh was ruled by Kaab who had a fair daughter, considered a pearl of his castle. He took great care of her. Many nurses, housemaids and tutors served her all the time.

Kaab was always telling his son Haress "If you take care of my only daughter after my death, you will make me rest in peace in my tomb". But all in vain. The cruel and villainous Haress poisoned his own father Kaab, in order to capture the throne.

While Haress was in power, he became a source of ill fate for his sister and the entire nation.

His sister with her ravishing beauty now shone like a star in the firmament of Balkh, just as the fame of her beauty spread all over Khorasan. She fell in an ardent love with Baktash, her brother's slave at a time when falling in love was considered a strictly unpardonable crime and evil.

One morning she said to her confident nurse Raana "You are my closest friend in this damned castle. Last night I lost my heart at a single sight of that young handsome man. I found out that his name is Baktash, the brave slave of my pitiless brother. Oh, there is no remedy for the agony of love." She picked up a pen and started writing this verse:

His love has rechained me again
All endeavours and strivings are
lost in vain.
I wish God makes you fall in love
With a stone-hearted and ruthless
one like yourself
So that ye acknowledge the pain
of love and agony of separation
And when you have fallen in love,
ye will have known my value.

She recited her verses to Raana and added with her trembling lips: "This young man is a source of inspiration for me. His name will constitute the opening verses of my *Devan* (book of poetry). I only want him to read my pensive and sad verses".

Raana whispered in gentle voice: "Never mind, my fair one. I will carry all your letters and bring you what Baktash writes to you".

The beautiful and fair Princess fell ill and the news of her illness soon spread throughout Samanid's territory. All physicians and magicians were summoned, but all failed to treat her. The brutal brother was so happy that now he had a pretext to get rid of his sister. Thinking of poisoning her he sent an apothecary to her.

Sarbatak, the apothecary, came by the bed-side of the Princess and mur-

mured: "Well, your brother has sent me here to cure you. I have a fine potion for you. It will treat you as soon as possible. Hurry up, drink it for rapid recovery."

In despair, she raised her head and uttered: "I am thankful to my brother who at last looked after me and sent you here. I have got a disease that cannot be treated with any medicine. You may please go away".

In the meanwhile, Haress sent Baktash who was a vigorous warrior to fight against one of his rivals, Ashiruddin and ordered his henchmen to kill Baktash in either case of his defeat or victory. But having become aware of the plot, the Princess courageously went to the battle field, wearing a mask and riding a horse. She took Baktash away and quickly disappeared.

Then Haress ordered his men to put Baktash in the remotest dungeon. But Raana released him by employing hundreds of tricks.

By and large, Haress took his last decision and gave a command for slaying both the grief-stricken girl and Baktash.

A cut-throat took the innocent girl to a bath and slew her mercilessly. But she wrote poems about her love and the name of her lover with her own blood until her last breath.

Raana brought all the news to Baktash. The handsome youth rushed promptly to Haress' castle and pierced his sword in Haress' chest and found his way to the bath where now the dead body of his beloved was lying. He read the poems aloud one by one and then killed himself with his own dagger. He also wrote the name of his sweetheart until his last breath.

This beautiful princess was the daughter of Kaab and sister of brutal Haress, **Rabia Balkhi**, the first woman of Afghanistan to compose poetry in Dari.

Thick clouds of obscurity have been casted upon the life profile of Rabia. Chroniclers and biographers mention various legends and stories about this great poetess.

Shaikh Fariduddin Attar and Maulana Jami are two major and trustworthy sources who cited Rabia and her poetry and romance in their works. Attar, a Dari poet wrote 500 couplets about her in his famous *Elahi Nama* (a book of Dari verse).

Some old literary workers of the country recognize Rabia as the founder of a new poetical metre in Dari poetry. Shibli Nomani says in his *Shirul Ajam* that the fourth Hijra Islamic century is the time of Samanid kings' reign in Afghanistan. Samanid rulers were famous for their religious tolerance and as patrons of poetry, arts and literature. Rabia who

A page of poetess' verses with her portrait

(Continued on p. 30)

Leading a New Life

A young
teacher

Afghan women, numbering over 7 million, constitute a major reserve of the great army of builders of a new and prosperous society in Afghanistan. The people's government takes great measures aimed at further emancipating and attracting women to socio-political life of the country. Though it is not an easy task to fulfil, at present in politics, production, highly specialized fields, arts and crafts, construction and even in repulsing the imperialist undeclared war, the share of Afghan women is persistently growing and has become part of the everyday social life in the DRA.

However, the path of emancipating women was and still is a difficult one. A decade ago, the majority of Afghan women were still leading the life of an alive commodity, having no rights in social life and being treated as slaves at home.

According to 1964 statistics, the total number of female workers exceeded a little over 800 throughout the country, and on the eve of the revolution this number was 5,000. There existed no regulations ever to protect their rights, specially their right to employment.

However, these objective factors of feudal social relations helped the emergence of the women's liberation movement in Afghanistan. The first steps towards women's emancipation were taken as early as in the third decade of the 20th century, when the national liberation movement was in full swing in the country. The first reforms of the Amanullah Khan reign included the measures (though immature and inconsistent ones) aimed at putting an end to the century-old alienation and isolation of women and at drawing them to active socio-political life of the society. The first school for girls was founded and women deputies appeared for the first time in the Loya Jirgah (Great Assembly). A special periodical entitled *Ershadulnaswan* (Women's Guidance) was published for the first time, which dealt thoroughly with problems and prospects of women's life in Afghanistan.

However, lack of objective prerequisites coupled with British plots and conspiracies against the independent Afghanistan dealt a telling blow on the early gains of reformists and the women's movement in particular. They were once again forced to stay at home behind high walls, and could





At an exhibition of hand-made articles at the women's club in Mazar-i-Sharif

At a typing course

appear in public only in veil and that, too, with a male companion.

The women's movement in Afghanistan was revived and gained strong momentum with the foundation of the PDPA, twenty-two years ago. One year after this historic event the Women's Democratic Organization of Afghanistan (WDOA) was established as a social organization affilia-

ted to the party, as a necessary prerequisite for social changes. Side by side with the party, the WDOA waged a resolute and multi-dimensional struggle against the decadent feudal relations in Afghanistan, and for democratic rights and freedoms.

In Parliament, in educational institutions and in demonstrations members of the Organization put for-

ward the demands and aspirations of oppressed women of the country for education, work and equality.

The revolution heralded a new life for Afghan women. In the course of the last nine years, many possibilities have been provided for the women of Afghanistan. For example, the total number of Afghan working women has grown fifty times and has reached 245,000.

Today, there are 440,000 female students in the country's educational institutions. The total number of Afghan female professors and teachers reached 190 and 11,000 respectively. About 80,000 women are enrolled in the literacy courses in various institutions and residential areas.

Politically, Afghan women have become unprecedentedly active. The WDOA (renamed into All-Afghanistan Women's Council in 1986) has become one of the strongest mass social organizations in the country with a total membership of over 68,000. Likewise, over 6,000 women of Afghanistan have taken up arms for defending the revolution. Hundreds of women are also serving in the army and the police forces of Afghanistan.

Women's clubs as a post-revolution phenomenon have become organizing and cultural centres where hundreds of working women and house-wives gather and exchange ideas as well as skills and artistic talents. Sixty-four such clubs have been established in Kabul and other provinces of the country.



(Continued from p. 28)

was a contemporary of Rudaki, the first Dari poet, had an outstanding poetic talent and taste.

Rabia wrote a lot of poems but unfortunately most of her works have not remained intact. But historical and tangible evidences do exist in Afghan classical literary works, that prove her to be a great poetess.

Rabia was a champion of her age in beauty, talent, attainment, keen insight and graces and fell in real and genuine love. Her verses were sung by Rudaki under the charming tone of harp.

The tomb of this tragic princess of Balkh was discovered only late in 1964. It lies to the south of the Shrine of Abu Nasr Parsa.

Young girls of Balkh and nearby provinces regularly visit her tomb and ask the poetess for inspiration in solving their own romantic problems.

By Ehsan Azari

YOUTH

DYOA's Contribution

As a vanguard mass organization, the Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan (DYOA) has considerably strengthened and its mobilizing role has further grown during the last nine years.

This social and political organization has mobilized Afghan boys and girls between 13—25 years of age. At present, its membership numbers 200,000 young men and women of different strata out of whom 34 per cent are peasant youth. The DYOA has 4,500 primary organizations, led by 193 precinct, 193 district and sub-district as well as 31 provincial committees.

Last year, the DYOA established 270 new organizations in educational and productive institutions. Of them, 180 were set up in residential areas. The DYOA members in educational institutions number 91,000.

To help the implementation of the programme of national reconciliation, 11,000 DYOA members have joined students' work and construction brigades through which 20 million Af. have been saved in the interest of the peace process.

To elucidate the peaceful policy of the PDPA and the government as well as the process of national reconciliation, members of the DYOA have gone to 18 provinces and 100 districts where they have also carried out programmes of voluntary work.

Currently, 93 publicity brigades are active under primary organizations of the DYOA. In addition to the publicity work, they rehabilitated 31 schools during last year and pledged to rehabilitate or build one school in each province.

Under the conditions of implementation of the national accord and the creation of a coalition national government, the DYOA has emerged as an important social organization that would do its best to carry out its grave tasks in building a new and prosperous society.

The DYOA trains the youth in the spirit of patriotism. For instance, to defend the country's borders the first youth volunteer group of the DYOA CC left for the frontier provinces last year. Moreover, over 400 girls have voluntarily joined the ranks of the armed forces and are courageously carrying out their sacred duties.



Youth music band at a performance

Under the present conditions of the undeclared imperialist war, the youth of the country understand that they can contribute much to the sacred cause of rebuffing the war. Thus, in addition to education, they learn military lessons and pass their summer vacations in sports camps. The first such camp was organized in 1985 and since then the experience has been further expanded.

In the course of military training, the youth get acquainted with the life, work and activities of the heroic armed forces. The lessons of bravery and heroism they learn in military units, are put into practice for realization of the policy of national reconciliation and in defence of the homeland and the gains of the April Revolution.

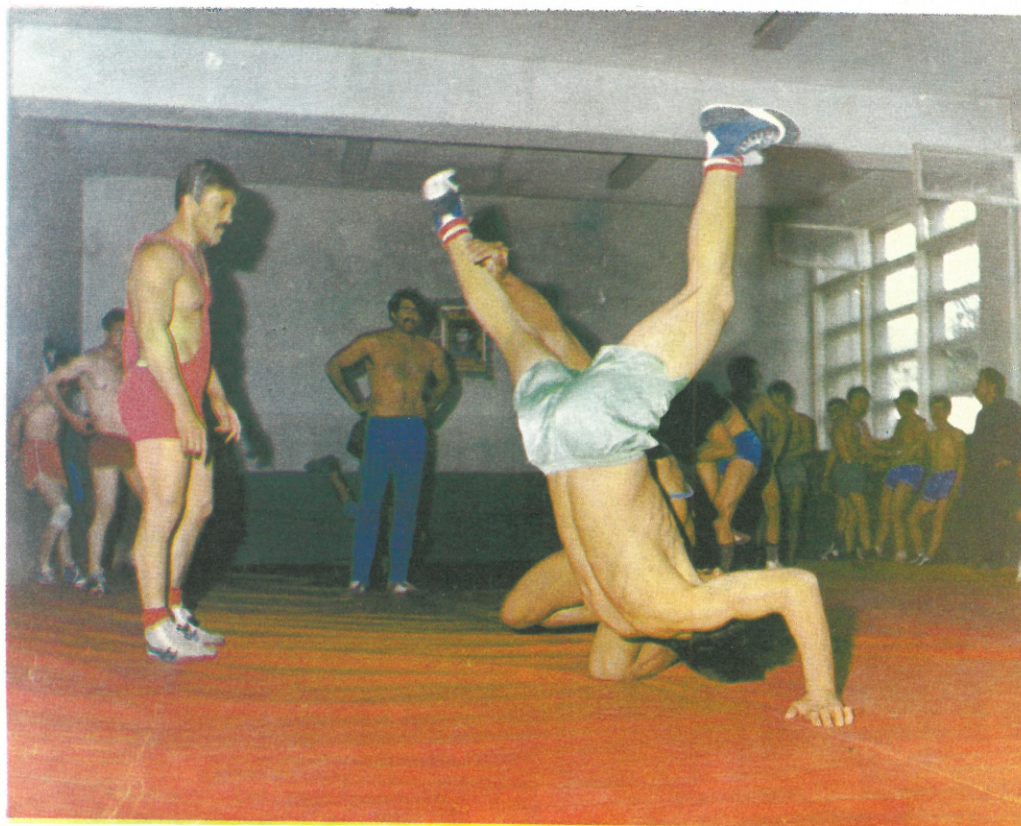
The DYOA has established friendly and fraternal relations with over 240 national and international organizations and students' unions of different countries. The DYOA is an active member of the WFDY and the IUS.

It has also signed cooperation protocols with 35 organizations according to which over 2,000 members of the DYOA have so far visited friendly countries for studies, recreation and official visits as well as for participation in international seminars. The DYOA delegations took part in 23 conferences, meetings, seminars and international festivals last year.

The delegation of the DYOA would participate in the first preparatory session of the 13th Youth International Festival which is to be held in Moscow.



Youth brigade of the Afghan Carpentry



SPORTS

Wrestling

Among the most ancient kinds of sports of the country *Pahlawani* (wrestling) has been common in Afghanistan since the times of ancient Aryans. Whenever one looks through history pages, he comes across the names of famous wrestlers who practiced this sport skillfully and deftly.

The first volume of *History of Afghanistan* by Ali Ahmad Kohzad says that Garshasp, an ancient Aryan kind was at the same time a handsome youth, war veteran and brave *Pahlawan* (wrestler). He has also been called "Garshasp Nariman" or "the wrestler" in stories of Kabul.

Among literary monuments where one can find numerous descriptions of wrestling scenes, Ferdousi's *Shahnama* (Book of Kings) is the most famous. The main hero of the poem, Rostam, a fair struggler for justice and welfare of his motherland, is at the same time a skillful wrestler.

One of his most prominent exploits was performed when Rostam had been sent to Mount Alburz in order to bring Khaiqubad, a desendent of ancient kings, who founded a new dynasty of Kayanids.

According to the author of *History of Afghanistan*, who refers to the *Avesta*, the sacred book of Zoroastrianism, as well as other historical books, when Khaikhesraw acceded to the throne of Bukhdi (present Balkh) along with his other reforms, he encouraged many legendary heroes to join his army, and tried to comfort those who had been distressed by a temporary victory of Toranians. Besides, he paid great attention to training wrestlers of that era. Among such persons we can name Tozayatus, who was very

famous for his super-power and great courage. Afterwards, thousands of courageous and strong heroes stood out from among the sons of Aryana.

Peshdadi and Kayani kings managed to expand their domains with the might of such heroes whose fame of boldness and manliness had decorated the pages of epics and are a pride of national culture of those times revealed in Vedas, Avesta and Shahnama.

We can understand through historical books that training of wrestlers was very popular in the Avestan era in our country. At that time, wrestling was considered not only a means of sports for the individual, but all sons of the family or their relatives were included in a batch of wrestlers assigned for the battle. The wrestlers used to wear special armour and employed offensive and defensive arms like mace, shield, battle-axe, sword, etc.

The wrestlers used to have for breakfast a glass of almond emulsion, four eggs with some poppy seeds, sugar, cardamon and rose petals. A stew of half kg. of mutton, half kg. of sheep fat and half kg. of onion was their lunch. They also used to drink half kg. of sugar dissolved in water after wrestling competitions.

Zarbe Meel (Bar-bell warming-up) is a useful exercise through which the wrestlers warm up their bodies before entering the competition. At first, a pair of *meels*, made of wood and iron, were rotated by them which were like mace. Today, they are made of hard wood and have a bulky cylinder-like body and two short handles. Each pair often weighs from 10 to 30 kg.

Zarbe Meel exercises are performed in several methods which are interesting and worth looking at. Here we describe the most common ones:

The wrestler holds as usual the *meels* and turns them around his shoulders. As he turns one *meel* by his left hand around the orbit of his shoulder and back, his right hand holds the other *meel* upward. Thus, the *meels* are turned fast around the shoulders of the wrestlers constantly one after another. The game lasts for around 1:15 minutes. To cheer up the players and unify the game a rhythmic music is often played.

Different Types of Wrestling in Afghanistan

Interested since ancient eras in wrestling, the inhabitants of our ancient land have always displayed skill in this sport. In south-western and north-western parts of the country, like Herat, Farah and Kandahar a unique type of wrestling is popular. In this variety, wrestlers both of the same height and age hold belts of each other and begin attempts to turn over the rival.

Another type of local wrestling is a Turkman or Uzbek style. The wrestlers wear *chapan* (a local Afghan long coat) and tie a piece of cloth around their waists. First, they walk slowly around a certain circle several times and then attack each other. The *Pahlawans* strive to hold on any part of the rival's body, neck, shoulder or waist and force the rival to fall down.

Free-Style Wrestling in Afghanistan

Among international wrestling events, free-style has been most developed. Since 1946, after the graduation of the first batch of professional sports teachers, it has become very popular throughout the country.

In the competitions held in 1947 on the eve of independence celebrations, Amir Shah Sulaiman Khel, a famous Afghan wrestler defeated his Polish strong opponent, Zebisko Nodich, in 12 minutes. The popularity of this event has been growing year after year. In 1982, the National Wrestling Federation was formed. Afghan wrestlers, trained qualified coaches were admitted for participation in foreign matches.

To encourage development of this kind of sports in the country, the State Committee for Sports and Physical Training has been sponsoring Ahmadjan Wrestling Trophy since 1982 in honour of Ahmadjan, a famous Afghan wrestler. Foreign teams take part in the competitions held annually on April 27. Sixty-three Afghan and foreign wrestlers have participated in the fifth international wrestling competitions of Ahmadjan Trophy organized on the eve of the ninth anniversary of the April Revolution this year in Kabul. Wrestling teams of the GDR, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Mongolian People's Republic, Cuba, the USSR, Czechoslovakia and the DRA participated in these competitions.

The Afghan wrestling team stood first and won the fifth Ahmadjan Trophy scoring 86 points. Four Afghan and six foreign wrestlers in different classes were awarded gold medals of the competitions.

By Z. Razban

Eltaf — a Virtuoso Vocalist

In the old city of Kabul there is a windy street, where the eminent Afghan classical musicians like Ustad (Maestro) Qasim, Ustad Shaida, Ustad Ghulam Hussain and Ustad Sar Ahang had been born and trained. Khwaja Khurdak is situated in the middle of the street where the late Mohammad Hussain Sar Ahang, the star of Afghan classical music, lived.

In 1952, in the house of Sar Ahang a child was born; he was named Elfat Hussain. When he reached the school-age, his father returned home from India and brought for his son a *Tanpura* (a harp-like musical instrument). His father became Eltaf Hussain's first teacher who familiarized his fingers with the strings of this *Tanpura*. Later, in his adolescence, he became a pupil of such great Indian classical musicians as Ustad Amanat Ali Khan and Ustad Fateh Ali Khan.

In 1973, he recorded his first song on the radio. The song was composed by himself and its verses were selected from Abul Ma'ani Bidel's *Mathnawis*. By now his radio songs and TV appearances are about 250, which include *Thumri* (special kinds of classical music of India), *Ghazal*, classical and light pieces. The music of most of his songs has been composed by his father. As lyrics for these songs he chooses mostly Bidel's verses, but sometimes picks up poems by Aziz Mahjoor whom he likes most of all the contemporary poets. Apart from singing, he is well-versed in playing certain musical instruments like *tabla*, harmonium and *sitar*. Eltaf went to India in 1974 and learned music in a classical music school of Bombay.

He works now as a teacher of Afghan classical music at the Fine Arts Faculty of Kabul University. Besides, he has trained some artists like Ajab Gul and Bashir Ulfat.

He has toured throughout India several times with his father. Once he undertook a trip to the Soviet Union also. He presented one of his classical songs at the annual contest of the State Committee for Culture in 1984 that earned him the best singer of the year prize. Likewise, he is

a winner of several merit letters given by the Artists' Union and Kabul University.

These days, Eltaf is rehearsing his two new patriotic songs dedicated to the national reconciliation policy. Besides, he is busy writing a book on the Afghan classical music that can be considered a sequel to his father's book '*Qanoon-e-Tarab*' (The Law of Strings).

Eltaf Hussain thinks that Afghan classical music has a bright future. He lauds the efforts of Ustad Hashim

and Ustad Rahim Bakhsh, the two masters of the present-day Afghan classical music who have greatly contributed to its popularization. In his research he tries to prove that Afghan classical music has close links with classical music of India. Investigating the origins of some of the pieces, he is convinced that some of the *ragas* (musical compositions) had originated in Kandahar and were later brought to India.

By Z. Razban



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